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CONTENTS VOL.34/NO.2

HAROLD O'CONNOR
Broken Tree Branch (pin), 2012
18k gold, silver, spectrolite
1 x 2 ¾"
PHOTO: HAROLD O'CONNOR

4 **Foreword**

IN PRODUCTION

16 **Oblik Atelier**
ANDREA DINOTO

LOOK

18 **Ineffable**
MARJORIE SIMON

UNDER THE COVERS

22 ***Otto Künzli: The Book***
URSULA ILSE-NEUMAN

DOSSIER

26 **Minneapolis-Saint Paul**
CAMILLE LEFEVRE

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

62 **Gary Griffin**
MARJORIE SIMON

64 **Society Page**
GWYNNE RUKENBROD

FEATURES

28 **Dagonit Stern Schocken: Shaped by the Land**
The probing jewelry of Dagonit Stern Schocken draws sustenance from Israel's geography and history.
DAVIRA S. TARIGAN

36 **Mark Maiorana: At the Edges**
While rooted in traditional blacksmithing, Marc Maiorana's innovative designs stretch the medium's boundaries.
M. ANNA FARIELLO

42 **Recasting Gunmetal: Taking Aim at Violence**
Morphing guns into art, these metalsmiths are on the frontline of efforts to address increasing violence.
LUKE T. BAKER

50 **Harold O'Connor: Between Art and Nature**
Harold O'Connor's compelling jewelry blends the splendor of nature and culture in unexpected ways.
ANDREA DINOTO

REVIEWS

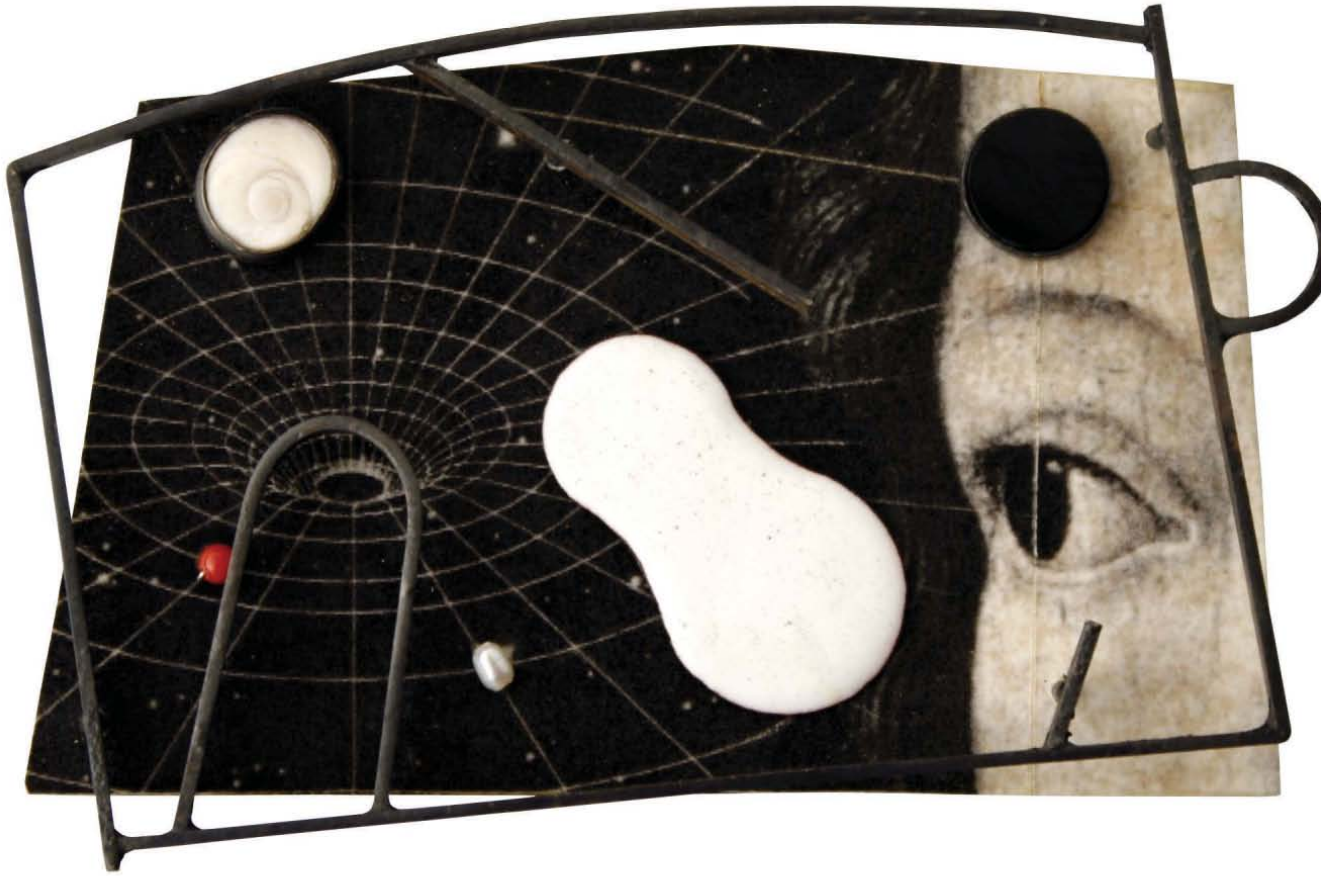
58 **Dashi Namdakov: The Nomad-Memory of the Future**
ANDREA DINOTO

59 **Nubis: Julia Maria-Künapp**
AARON PATRICK DECKER

60 **Attai Chen: Compounding Fractions**
MISHA KAHN

61 **Functions: Haley Bates, Sun Kyoung Kim, and Myra Mimlitsch-Gray**
LYNN COOL

Cover: HAROLD O'CONNOR
Arial Landscape (brooch), 2012
18k gold, silver, red gold, shibuichi, spectrolite.
1 ½ x 1 ¾"
PHOTO: HAROLD O'CONNOR
(see Feature on page 50)



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Ramon Puig Cuyàs, *No. 1279 "Ita est"* (brooch) from the UTOPOS series, 2009. Private collection, New York. Photo courtesy of Ramon Puig Cuyàs

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FOREWORD

WHAT DO A bullet shell, vintage toothpaste tube, airplane safety manual, squashed can, cremated dog bone, and AK-47 have in common? They have all been transmuted into artworks featured in this issue of *Metalsmith*. Of course, the creative repurposing of found objects is not new and has an art historical provenance dating back a century to Duchamp's first readymade. As with any tactic or technique, however, it is not newness per se that counts, but the manner in which it's used. "It is only the unimaginative who ever invents," affirms Oscar Wilde. "The true artist is known by the use he makes of what he annexes." Indeed, astute annexation is the hallmark of the artists showcased on these pages.

Metal, itself a "found" material, is inherently recyclable and can be melted and reformed at will. Throughout history, metal objects have been co-opted for various ends, most frequently for military purposes. The reverse of this process—turning swords into plowshares—is smartly practiced by contemporary metalsmiths, who "transform actual firearms, ammunition, and other instruments of violence into works of beauty and benevolence," as Luke Baker writes in his article, "Recasting Gunmetal: Taking Aim at Violence." The resulting pieces are disarming in both senses of the term.

Instead of mining munitions piles, cover artist Harold O'Connor annexes elements from his immediate surroundings. In jewelry series based on his own backyard or abandoned mines and railroads of his home state Colorado, O'Connor transforms the domestic into the exotic. Perhaps his most poignant piece, *Remnants of My Best Friend,* ensconces the cremated remains of his beloved dog in a rugged amber brooch. Similarly, Israeli artist Dagonit Stern Schocken draws on her environs to create unexpected jewelry and installations. Her "Kalandia Checkpoint" series, for example, salvages crushed cans from a West Bank security station, redeeming them in pendants with diamonds and gold.

All of these works remind us of the multiple lives embodied in metal and other materials. Like James de Givenchy's aptly titled *Phoenix Cuff* made with AK-47 steel, these radiant objects are reborn from the ashes of an often tragic past.

SUZANNE RAMLJAK
EDITOR

The mission of *Metalsmith* magazine is to document, analyze, and promote excellence in jewelry and metalsmithing. In fulfillment of the goal of producing a significant document of the field, editorial content will emphasize contemporary activities and ideas, with supportive content to include relevant historical work and critical issues.

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"Always a Journey" - Formed/fabricated brass & copper relief
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Coming in *Metalsmith*...

Feature: Bob Dylan's Gates

In the Studio: Julie Speidel

Feature: Helen Britton

Book Review:
Contemporary Jewelry in Perspective

Feature: History of Engagement Rings

Possessed: Donna Schneier Collection

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Hopper Drawing:
A Painter's Process

March 13–June 20

left: Edward Hopper Study for **Morning Sun** 1952 Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Josephine N. Hopper Bequest 70.290
below: **Morning Sun** 1952 Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio; Howald Fund Purchase

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Hopper Drawing: A Painter's Process is organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. This exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities.

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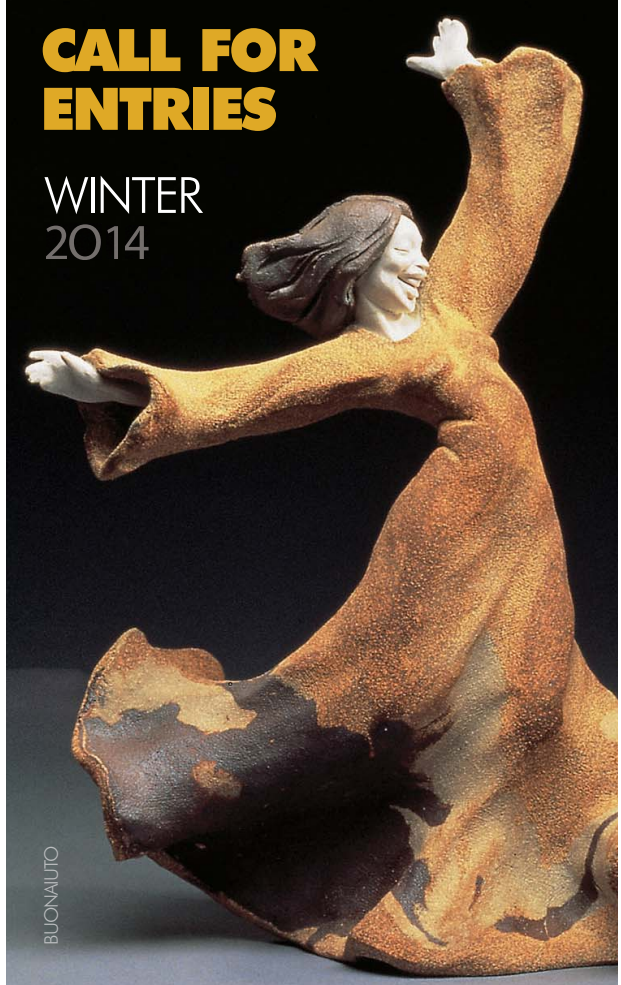

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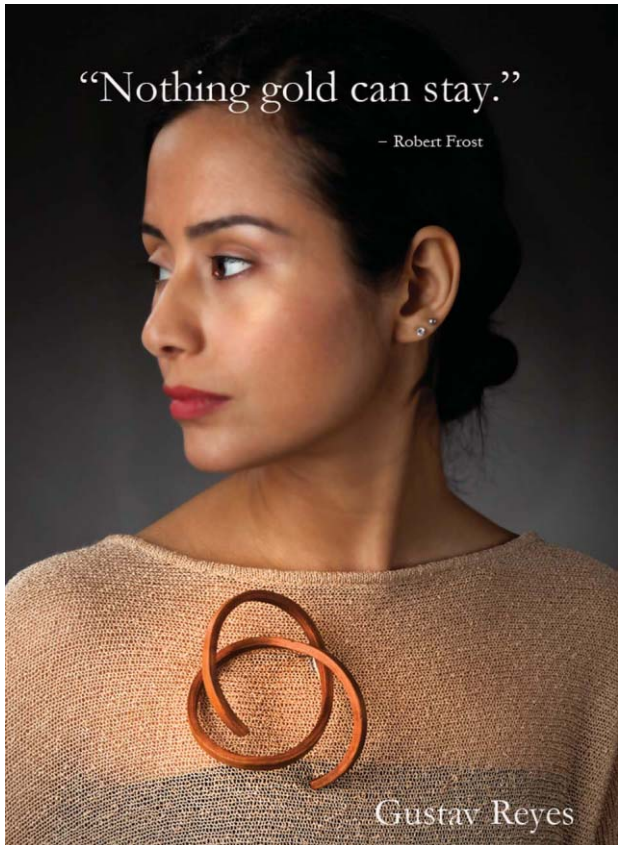
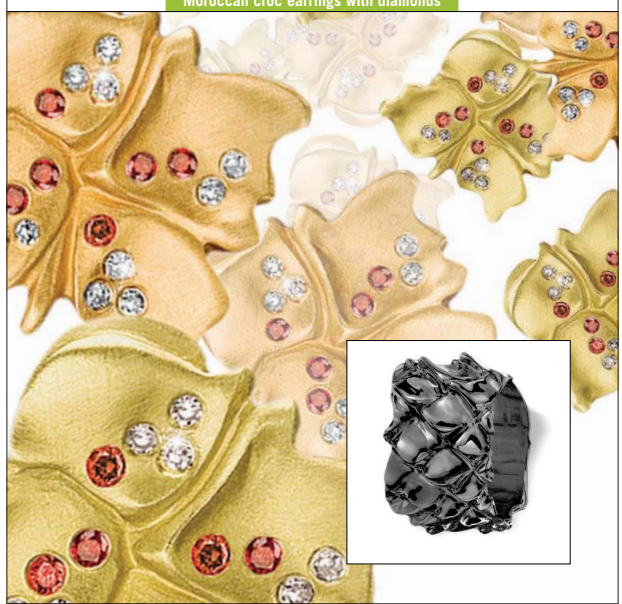


Ethereal Nature
elements

Moroccan croc earrings with diamonds



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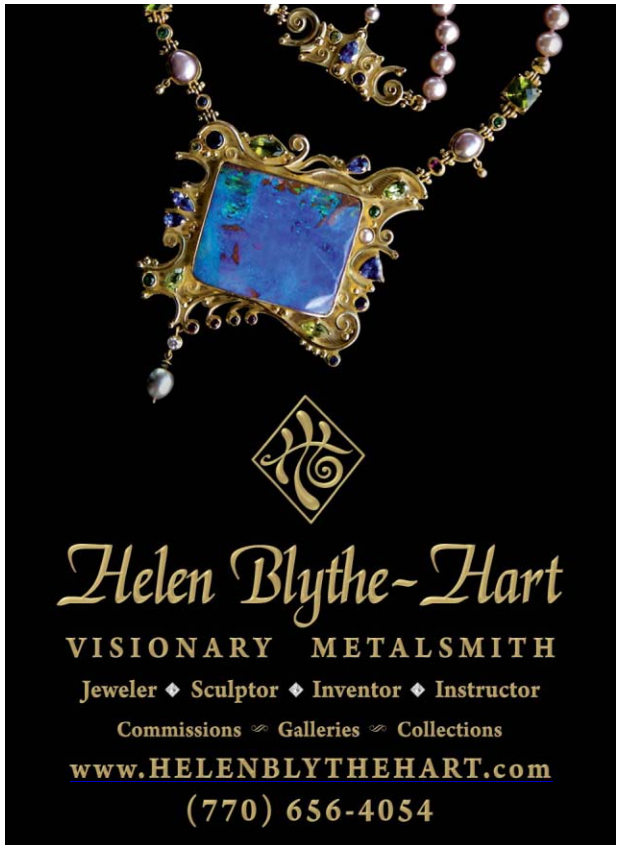

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radiant by Lynn Cool, photo by Aaron Paden

Oblik Atelier
Art into Fashion

BY ANDREA DINOTO

Jeweler Mia Hebib behind the counter at the 2012 LOOT jewelry sale.

Mia Hebib in her open studio at the Museum of Arts and Design, New York, 2011.

IT'S A 10-MINUTE trek from the subway to Mia Hebib's studio in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, an area that was for decades a largely Polish enclave and is now buzzing with hipster bars and artists of every stripe who've migrated here to find affordable workspace. The high-fashion world of Manhattan lies just across the East River, a fact not lost on Hebib, who started her jewelry business in 2007 while working as a corporate designer "for very large companies that dealt with the QVCs, the department stores." Bosnian born and Croatian educated, Hebib named her company Oblik Atelier as a nod to her heritage (*oblick* means "shape" in Croatian) and as a clue to her aesthetic: strong shapes in silver, gold, and brass are employed in three distinctly different mini collections that span the art-jewelry and fashion worlds. "I don't belong strictly in one world," she says, "I like to marry the two."

Hebib began her art education in Zagreb, Croatia, at the School for Applied Arts and Design, then migrated to America where she received a BFA in metals from the Savannah College of Art and Design in 2001. She moved to New York soon after, dreaming of becoming an artist but instead finding herself working in corporate design. "It was far from my training," she says, "but I maintained a studio space in my apartment and just kept making jewelry." At the same time, her fashion career progressed to the point where she was designing jewelry for the notable fashion houses Liz Claiborne, Tory Burch, and BCBG, as well as for the Henri Bendel department store. In 2007, Hebib decided to launch Oblik Atelier. "I didn't want to make it a giant business," she says, "and I didn't want to walk away from what I had learned in the corporate world." The lines she developed—"13," "Brass Band," and "I Do"—work together to present her multifaceted vision. Her limited-edition "13" line (comprised of seven different designs) is produced mainly in hand-wrought silver. (Only thirteen editions of each design are produced, so owning a "13" piece comes with built-in cachet.) "Brass Band" is a bold, gold-plated and patinated line intended to hold its own in the accessory-driven fashion world—the metal is handworked by Hebib into dramatic fabric-like folds that complete a neckline with panache or bring a flash of serious glamour to the wrist. The brass pieces, Hebib observes, "could sit in a gallery as well

as a high-end boutique." With "I Do," she offers a custom wedding line, the only one of the three to feature stones prominently. Opting out of the usual craft-fair circuit, which she considers largely "archaic," Hebib nevertheless has effectively managed to get her work, and herself, noticed in both the fashion press (*Vogue*, the *New York Times*, and others) and the art-jewelry world (Lark books' "500" series), although recognition hasn't come without a struggle. In 2008, she joined an accessories showroom— "kind of like a store without a storefront"—in which ten or twelve designers of jewelry, handbags, small leather goods, shoes, etc., joined forces in hopes of attracting buyers. With the economic decline they shut down after a year. "The timing couldn't have been worse," says Hebib, though she did make a few store contacts. Most fortuitously, the group met a business counselor who told them: "You guys need to make those calls and connect with people who will ultimately be selling your work." Hebib admits that acquiring retail venues can be "a tedious process," from selecting an appropriate store to establishing a personal contact there. Often she walks in wearing her jewelry to make the initial introduction. She now sells her work through several online websites, numerous retail stores, and galleries nationwide.

In recent years, Hebib demonstrated her commitment to art jewelry by organizing an exhibition in Williamsburg, Brooklyn that presented the field to a wide New York City audience. In 2011, a stint as artist in residence at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York "rid me of my fear of speaking about my work," she says. "When people asked me how I got there I had to look at where I'd been and how I started, asking myself if I've grown creatively." The MAD residency led to her participation in the 2012 LOOT! show and sale at the museum, an annual autumn event. Not only did Hebib make new store and gallery contacts there, but she was also invited to be part of a craft biennial in South Korea. With the relaunch of her website last year, Hebib is discovering that art and fashion do indeed marry well—for love and money.

Andrea DiNoto is a New York-based writer on jewelry, art, and design

Furthermore:
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Always in Motion (bracelet), 2010/11
oxidized sterling silver
2 ½ x 3 x 2 ½"

Doublefold (cuff), 2012
gold plated brass
2 ½ x 1 ½ x 2"

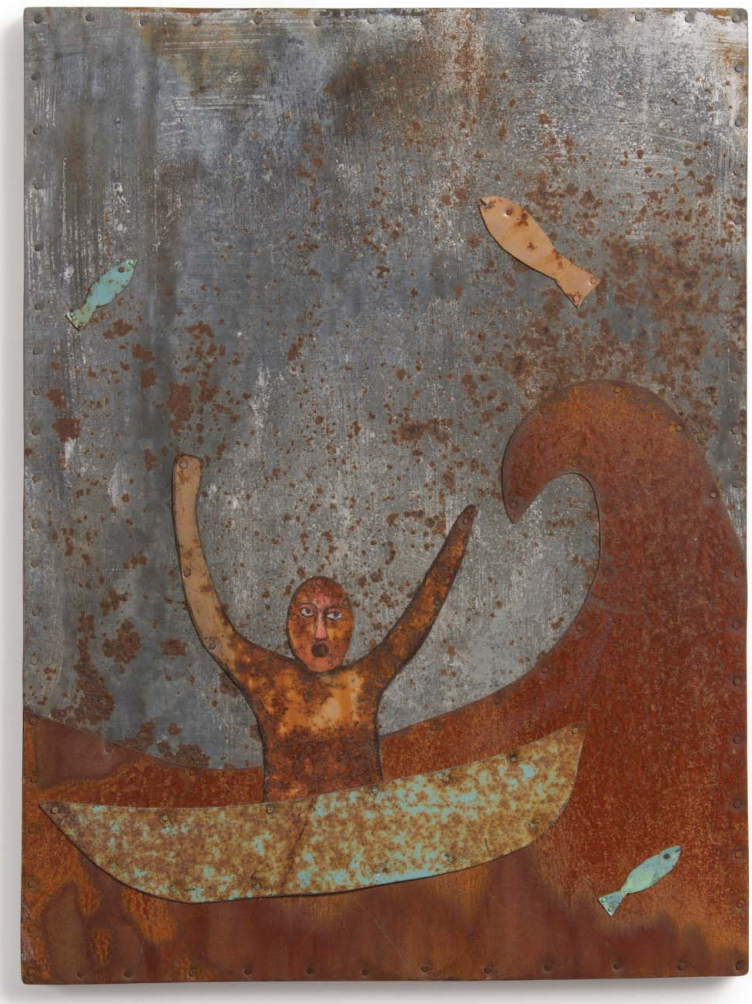
Ineffable

BY MARJORIE SIMON

INDESCRIBABLE. INEXPRESSIBLE. WHERE words fail, use a word that means just that. John Berger begins his seminal work, *Ways of Seeing*, by stating the obvious: "seeing comes before words." We see the world before we have words to describe it, but soon enough, words become powerful tools to communicate what we see. Berger continues, "images were first made to conjure up the appearances of something that was absent."[1]

Substitute "object" for "image" and now we're in our part of the world. An object can outlast the emotions that inspired it or that it evokes—love, loss, beauty, tenderness, anxiety, or innumerable opposing and complementary states of being. Transitoriness, not permanence. The frisson of mortality. Beauty confronting its opposite. Fragility coupled with resilience. Solitude and communion.

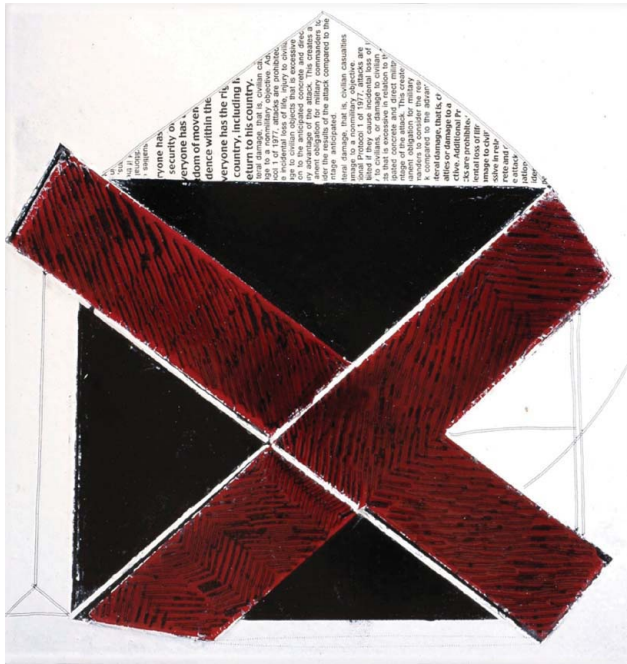
What gets my attention? Objects that break your heart. A caress of the material, for we craft artists are unrepentantly materialists. Tenderness and vulnerability. The way rust bleeds into the surface of Christine Clark's components in her installation *Herded,* or how breath seems to leach out of the collapsed sphere in Biba Schutz's brooch *Tillie*. Materializing the inconceivable and unimaginable, as enamelist Elizabeth Turrell silently memorializes the devastation of war. It might be Pat Flynn's iron feather, dusted with gold, Marilyn da Silva's empty dwelling, or Julie Blyfield's silver flotsam, which appear to have just blown into our field of vision. Unseen waves of magnetism that attract and repel equally, in Tom Muir's prickly husk of a common ritual object—the teapot. Judith Hoyt's solitary voyager, literally at sea without a paddle. Even two sturdy iron limbs by Myra Mimlitsch-Gray seem precariously balanced. I try describing these expressive objects, but I keep coming back to the word *ineffable*.



Judith Hoyt
Big Wave, 2010
found metal, plywood, oil paint
16 x 12"
PHOTO: JAMES FOSSETT

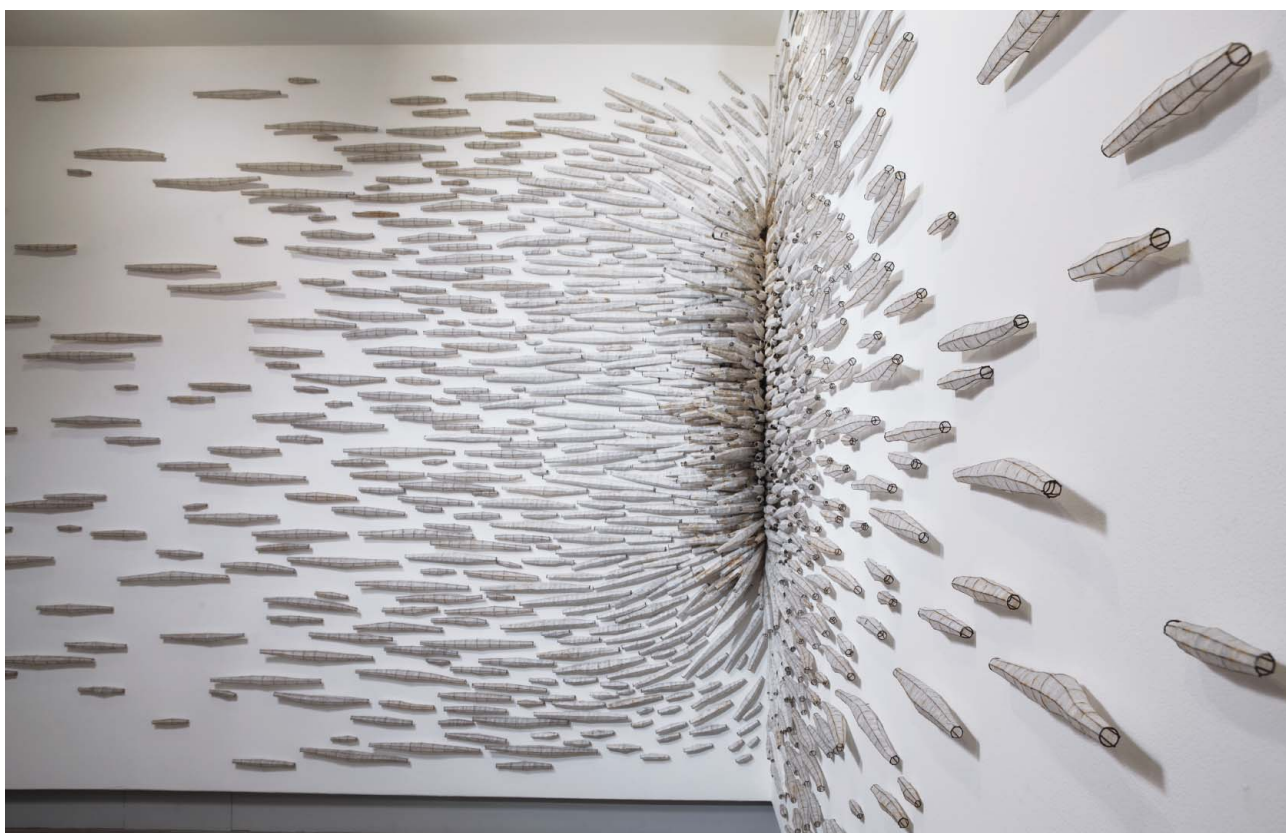
Marjorie Simon is a metalsmith and writer based in Philadelphia.

1. John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), p. 10.



Elizabeth Turrell
"SixMarkers-UniversalDeclaration of Human Rights" series, 2004
(detail of panel 2)
drawn and painted enamel, pre-enameled industrial steel, enamel transfers
12 x 12"
PHOTO: ELIZABETH TURRELL

Christine Clark
Herded, 2012
steel wire, handmade paper
installation room 20 x 15'
PHOTO: STEPHEN FUNK



Biba Schutz
Tillie (brooch), 2010
sterling silver, Herkimer diamond, handmade paper, adhesive, silk thread, steel
2 x 2 x ¾"
PHOTO: RON BOSZKO

Tom Muir
Please Do Not Touch The Artwork (teapot), 2004
honey locust, sycamore, copper
18 x 18 x 24"
PHOTO: TIM THAYER

Above left:
Myra Mimlitsch-Gray
Limbs, 2007
cast ductile iron
24 x 10 x 9"
PHOTO: MYRA MIMLITSCH-GRAY
CREATED IN THE ARTS/INDUSTRY RESIDENCY PROGRAM OF THE JOHN MICHAEL KOHLER ARTS CENTER

Marilyn da Silva
Dwelling I, 1992
copper, brass, gesso, colored pencil, sand
21 x 12 x 10"
PHOTO: M. LEE FATHERREE

Pat Flyn
Diamond Feather Brooch, 2013
iron, 18k, 22k, 18k palladium, diamonds
6 x 1 x ¼"
PHOTO: HAP SAKWA

Otto Künzli: The Book

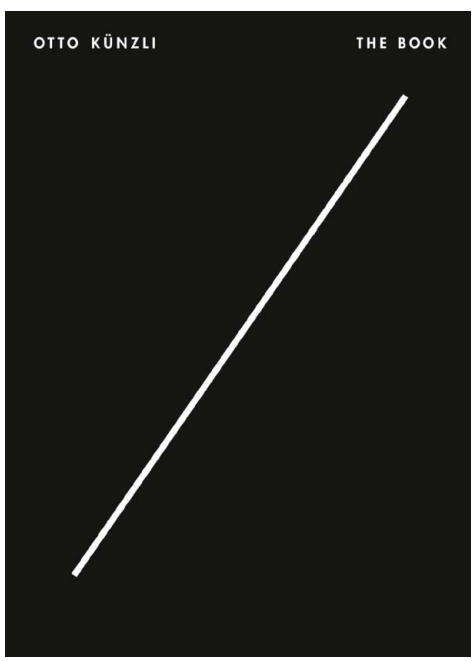
FLORIAN HUFNAGL AND DIE NEUE SAMMLUNG, EDS. STUTTGART: ARNOLDSCHE ART PUBLISHERS, 2013

BY URSULA ILSE-NEUMAN

REVERED IN MUNICH—GERMANY'S jewelry capital—and throughout Europe, Otto Künzli (b. 1948) was the subject of a unique celebration that was the highlight of *Schmuck*, the annual Week of Jewelry, this past March. The festivities took multiple forms: "Otto Künzli: The Exhibition," *Otto Künzli: The Book*, Otto Künzli: For Sale," and finally, "Otto Künzli: The Party," held in an abandoned metro station.

One of today's most provocative and influential jewelry artists, Künzli was Hermann Jünger's first student when the renowned German goldsmith began teaching at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste (Academy of Fine Arts) Munich, in 1972. Proclaiming, "*Goldsmithing* is just another word for art," Jünger encouraged Künzli not to imitate anyone else but to take his own path in defining jewelry. In 1991, Künzli succeeded Jünger as director of the academy's jewelry department, where he continues to mentor students in a rigorous five-year program.

The central event of the Künzli celebration was the exhibition of over 200 of the artist's works, spanning more than four decades of his career. Held in a temporary building adjacent to the Pinakothek der Moderne, the retrospective was a revelatory demonstration of the enormous range of Künzli's creative accomplishments. The more enduring tribute to Künzli's lifelong position at the vanguard of jewelry thought and jewelry making came, however, in spades, through *Otto Künzli: The Book*. Conceived by the artist, this massive 696-page tome weighs in at 7 pounds and features 500 color and 500 black-and-white images, most of which were photographed by Künzli himself.



The volume is divided into three sections: essays, images, and documentation, with the images of the artist's prodigious jewelry output presented in chronological order (more or less), together with those of his larger installations, photography projects, drawings, and ephemera from exhibitions and projects. The documentary section begins with "Paralipomenon," (from the Greek, meaning "things left out") contextual information that enriches the photographs with anecdotes and statements from the artist himself.

Despite the volume's heft, the diversity of material illustrated in it makes it difficult to put down. The first work I searched for was *The New Flag*, the highly visible emblem that Künzli selected for posters throughout the city. In the book, it can be seen as it was displayed at Wesleyan University in 1992: a large black fabric that serves as the background for a white image derived from a combination of superimposed symbols: a Latin cross, broken arrow (a Native American peace symbol), skull, and Mickey Mouse, looking for all the world like a piratical Jolly Roger but clearly recalling the Ku Klux Klan. It is a jarring work meant to represent the complex fusion of ideologies that comprise contemporary America, as well as Künzli's own disillusionment with the once-admired icons of his youth.

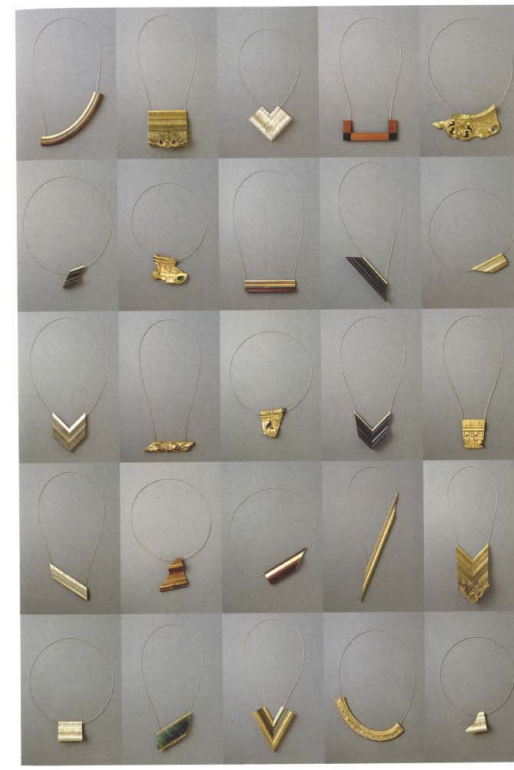
Undoubtedly, the piece that has become iconic for Künzli is his 1980 *Gold Makes Blind* bracelet, in which he encased a gold ball in black latex. "Gold . . . always comes out of darkness, out of stone, the mountain, while at the same time representing light." That contradiction interested Künzli, who wanted to return gold to the dark. The work also challenges the jewelry value system that depends on precious metals. The bracelet was produced in multiples, and several pages in the book are devoted to pictures of men and women from all walks of life taking delight in wearing his seriously playful bangle.

Simply flipping through the images of Künzli's jewelry will not do, however; one piece may be self-explanatory, while another may be ambiguous and complex. Some pieces are designed to make you think, others, simply to be enjoyed, and here, the essayists are excellent guides.

Three essays and a conversation with the artist follow a laudatory foreword by Florian Hufnagl, director of the Pinakothek der Moderne.[1] "All or Nothing" an essay by Ellen Maurer Zilioli, former curator at the Pinakothek der Moderne, is highly erudite and well researched, replete with fifty footnotes as it follows the arc of Künzli's development. Although the dense, sesquipedalian translation from the German is a challenge,

Fragment | pendant | 1986 | wood, gold leaf, paint, steel

292



Fragment | pendants | 1986 | demolished picture frames: wood, plastic, gold leaf, silver leaf, paint, steel

293

Zilioli rewards the effort with many insights into the work of the artist, who has been her friend of many years. Chronicling his training as a goldsmith in Zurich from 1965 to 1970, she points to his early exposure to the Bauhaus aesthetic, and particularly to Max Bill, who asked, "What is meant by adornment? Aren't signs and symbols what are ultimately meant?" Zilioli chose to include this apt quotation because it prefigured the course that Künzli would follow.

Zilioli vividly describes Künzli's insatiable curiosity and desire to free himself from jewelry conventions, beginning in 1976 in the Munich train station, where he used wires, scraps of paper, and wooden rods to try out basic forms and patterns on his own torso. She goes on to elucidate the pivotal themes in Künzli's work, including the value of gold, money, power, and love, and the myths entwined with them, and she demystifies many of the iconic motifs that are so closely associated with him.

One of the highlights of the book is the discussion between Walter Grasskamp, head of the art history department at the Academy of Fine Arts Munich, and the artist. Grasskamp skillfully asks the right questions and wisely allows the very articulate artist to speak for himself. For example, in response to Grasskamp's simple inquiry about what it was like to grow up in Switzerland, Künzli cites his exposure to influences from all four points of the compass: the Bauhaus and Beuys to the north, the Paris art scenes with Man Ray and Marcel Duchamp to the west, Arte Povera to the south, and the Viennese Actionists to the east.

Grasskamp prompts Künzli to explain how he took front and center as an artist provocateur in 1980 with his rebellion against "the red dot," the archetypal symbol used by galleries to indicate art that has been sold and thus become a commodity. Attempting to turn this practice on its ear, Künzli planned an exhibition in an empty gallery where he would "purchase" anyone who came in by sticking a red dot on the person. Although the gallery backed off when they realized his intention, the highly charged miniature ornament became, ironically, an instant commercial success in a wide range of colors.

The conversation ends with a discussion of Künzli's contribution to the debate on the authentic and the counterfeit for "The Power of Copying," a 2010 exhibition/conference in

Xuzhou, China. Drawing on the traditions of the European seal ring and the Chinese block seal, Künzli created a Chinese seal ring, a form that, according to the artist, "cannot exist and has never previously existed." Playing on the form's contrived authenticity, Künzli had half of the seal rings hand-carved with the Chinese word *shanzhai* (fake) and the other half with *yanpin* (copy). Here again, Künzli successfully transformed an intellectually challenging idea into a remarkable series of desirable, wearable objects.

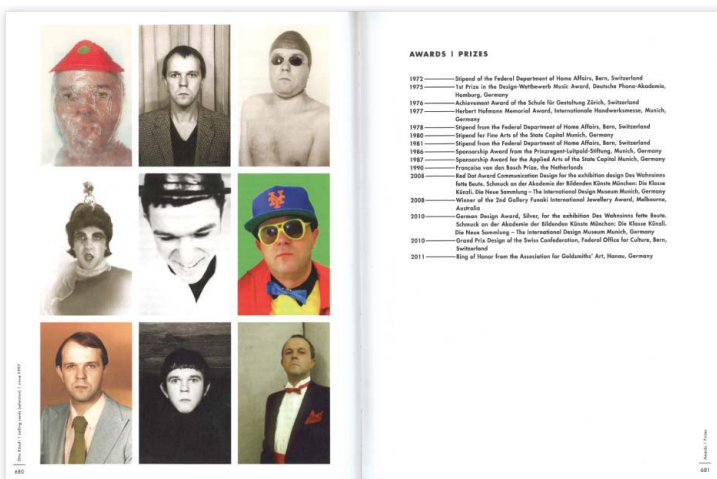
The essay "Here Jewels Maketh Not the Man," by Jacqueline Burckhardt, senior editor of the art journal *Parkett*, is a brief but perceptive discussion of several of Künzli's pivotal works, including perhaps his most poignant piece, the *Wedding Ring Chain* (1985–86), composed of forty-eight "used" wedding rings that were obtained through classified ads placed by Künzli in newspapers. The necklace is often described as unwearable because of the symbolic weight of the accumulated stories and fates of the previous owners. Burckhardt also discusses the 1984 *Schönheitsgalerie* (Gallery of Beauties), an installation of photographs of young women wearing replicas of antique gilded picture frames, a witty take on the Nymphenburg Palace's portraits of Munich's most beautiful women between 1827 and 1850, which remain on view today.

The final essay, "The Cartogram of Reversals," is by Munich author and lecturer Pravu Mazumdar, whom Künzli describes as his favorite sparring partner. Mazumdar provides an in-depth analysis of the essential, but evolving, elements of his friend's work, as well as his humanity and keen wit. Bringing his own personal and critical reactions to bear on the powerful symbolism, ambiguity, and irony of Künzli's oeuvre, the author places his discussions of the aforementioned *Gold Makes Blind* in the context of the "sun metal's dual relationship with darkness and light. To illustrate his point, Mazumdar describes a 1984 slide show for the Society of North American Goldsmiths in which Künzli placed a "slide" made of gold in the projector, drolly calling the nonpicture "a projection of reality" as the room plunged into darkness.

The book concludes with Künzli's curriculum vitae, his dazzling lists of exhibitions, works in collections, awards, and lectures. The lecture titles prove delightful but maddening for what one has missed by not attending them: "Sideways and Other Detours" (Portugal, 2000), "I'm Not Swiss and Other Short Stories" (Australia, 2003), "I Am Swiss and Other Bad News" (Australia, 2003), "π, or the Significance of Holes in My Work" (Japan, 2009), and "Copy and Paste—A Wonderful Chinese Nightmare" (Sweden, 2011), to mention just a few. The only "glitch" in the end matter, clearly intentional, is the unreadable eight-page bibliography, which appears as a continuous run-on sentence with sparse punctuation and without spacing between entries.

No review would be complete without mentioning the book's many photographs of Künzli himself, from a color photo taken in his first year (1948) to a closing series of hilarious portrait cards showing him in nine guises, including an imperious snob in a red-tie dinner jacket, a swimmer in bathing cap and goggles, and a baseball fan in bright yellow glasses and a NY Mets cap. Probing life's many sad sides and injustices is essential for Künzli, but just as essential is doing it with irony and, to put it in Künzli's words, "a good shot of humor."

All in all, this encyclopedic book is an exhilarating excursion into the far-flung reaches of Künzli's inquiring mind and his astonishing ability to create objects and images worthy of his ideas.


AWARDS | PRIZES

1972 Stipend of the Federal Department of Home Affairs, Bern, Switzerland
1975 1st Prize in the Design-Wettbewerb Music Award, Deutsche Phono-Akademie, Hamburg, Germany
1976 Achievement Award of the Schule für Gestaltung Zürich, Switzerland
1977 Herbert Hofmann Memorial Award, Internationale Handwerksmesse, Munich, Germany
1978 Stipend from the Federal Department of Home Affairs, Bern, Switzerland
1980 Stipend for Fine Arts of the State Capital Munich, Germany
1981 Stipend from the Federal Department of Home Affairs, Bern, Switzerland
1986 Sponsorship Award from the Prinzregent-Luitpold-Stiftung, Munich, Germany
1987 Sponsorship Award for the Applied Arts of the State Capital Munich, Germany
1990 Françoise van den Bosch Prize, the Netherlands
2008 Red Dot Award Communication Design for the exhibition design Das Wohnsinns fette Beute. Schmuck an der Akademie der Bildenden Künste München: Die Klasse Künzli. Die Neue Sammlung – The International Design Museum Munich, Germany
2008 Winner of the 2nd Gallery Funaki International Jewellery Award, Melbourne, Australia
2010 German Design Award, Silver, for the exhibition Das Wohnsinns fette Beute. Schmuck an der Akademie der Bildenden Künste München: Die Klasse Künzli. Die Neue Sammlung – The International Design Museum Munich, Germany
2010 Grand Prix Design of the Swiss Confederation, Federal Office for Culture, Bern, Switzerland
2011 Ring of Honor from the Association for Goldsmiths' Art, Hanau, Germany

Ursula Ilse-Neuman is curator of jewelry at the Museum of Arts and Design, New York.

1. There are also short tributes from the two museums scheduled to host the exhibition in 2014 and 2015: Musée de design et d'arts appliqués contemporains (MUDAC) in Lausanne, Switzerland, and the Metropolitan Teien Art Museum in Tokyo, Japan.

My father-in-law with Mercedes glasses and golden drawing pin | 1983

182

Der Goldene Punkt | brooch | 1983 | drawing pin with cop mate from 900 gold, rubber, wallpaper, plastic sack

183

Shuzihui | 25 Chinese seal rings | 2012 | including agalmatolite | inscription: Fake

598

Yanpin | 25 Chinese seal rings | 2012 | including agalmatolite | inscription: Copy

599

Minneapolis-Saint Paul

BY CAMILLE LEFEVRE

A VIBRANT CULTURAL milieu in which diverse creative forms (visual art, music, dance, theater, public art), as well as iconic architecture and design take root and flourish has made the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul a destination for visitors nationally and globally. Public and private support for the arts—whether for multimillion-dollar arts organizations, small nonprofits, or individual artists—and a growing population of sophisticated, art-savvy consumers, has created a supportive economy for established and emerging artists.

Silver goblets by Tim Lloyd featured at Grand Hand Gallery in St. Paul.
PHOTO: LAURIE ASHBACH

Metalsmithing, while more under-the-radar than other fine arts in the Twin Cities, is an integral part of the culture. "The concentration, variety and depth of art here have created fertile ground for metalsmithing and the fine-art jewelry community," says Ann Ruhr Pifer, owner of the Grand Hand Gallery in St. Paul, a top venue for discovering metal sculpture and jewelry in the Twin Cities.

"The community of art-jewelry designers covers broad territory in terms of category, style and experience," adds George Sawyer, art-jeweler and master of the patterned metalwork technique known as *mokume-gane* (wood-grained metal). "Art and design are important here. Therefore, young people feel safe embarking on a metalworking career and doing something artful, because art making is part of the local culture."

The Twin Cities doesn't have a jewelry or metalsmith school which, by producing graduates with a discernible approach or style, would give the art form a higher profile. Nor does the area have a heritage of metalwork enjoyed by cities such as New York, Chicago, or Charleston. But the region's jewelry and metals community has distinguishing characteristics, nonetheless. One is the individualism of the artists, as they've forged their own paths into metalworking and jewelry making.

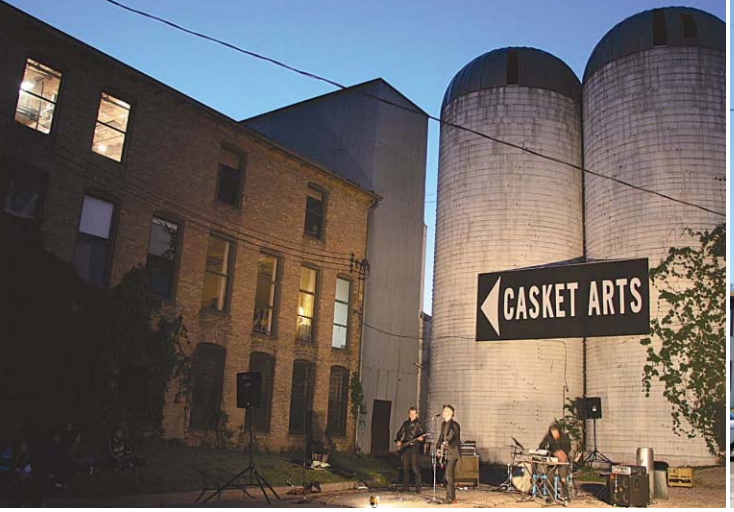
Some studied with sculptor Wayne Potratz, a professor of sculpture and foundry in the University of Minnesota's Department of Art, and a master of metal-casting techniques; others with metalsmith Tim Lloyd at Carleton College in Northfield, a college town south of the Twin Cities. The Minneapolis Community and Technical College also offers welding and metal fabrication classes and has a watchmaking and jewelry-making program. The Guild of Metalsmiths, created in 1976, has educational programs in blacksmithing, tinsmithing, coppersmithing, and architectural wrought iron. In recent years, the Chicago Avenue Fire Arts Center opened and offers classes in fire-art forms of jewelry fabrication, including traditional metalsmithing, casting, and piercing. Artists such as Kirk Sklar of Metal Heart Jewelry and Sarah Michaela Sitarz of Quench Jewelry Arts give classes in metalsmithing, cold connections and riveting, and base metal and precious metal etching.

Most likely, however, today's emerging fine-art metalworkers were mentored by a contingent of internationally renowned jewelers and smiths, including George Sawyer, Heinz Brummel, Steven Vincent, and Judith Kinghorn. The group has nurtured generations of fine artists by sharing studio space, providing instruction and apprenticeships, and hosting joint shows. In doing so, these masters have "created a critical mass," says Pifer, "a great community in which well-established, working artists mentor younger emerging artists and help them with their careers."

Work by Twin Cities metalsmiths can be found at the Walker Art Center, where jewelry is considered part of contemporary design. The Walker's annual spring Jewelry Artists Mart brings together more than twenty local jewelry artists. In addition to Grand Hand Jewelry in St. Paul, Max's in St. Louis Park, a first-ring suburb, includes artisan-made fine jewelry. Gallery 360 in Minneapolis carries fine-art jewelry by such up-and-comers as Emily Johnson and Britta Lynn Kauppila, among others. Many jewelry collectors and consumers, however, buy directly from artists during open-studio events—a regular feature in Northeast Minneapolis.

In the former industrial areas of Northeast, large manufacturing and warehouse buildings have been converted into artist studios and galleries. The Northeast Minneapolis Arts District organizes several annual events, during which these buildings and their artists participate with open studios and sales. During a First Thursday event each month, Art-a-Whirl in May, and Art Attack in November, hundreds of artists working in hand-crafted and custom jewelry, metal, as well as custom furniture, fiber arts, ceramics, glass, mosaics, and textiles welcome visitors and buyers.

Kirk Sklar and students at Metal Heart Jewelry Studio.
PHOTO: LINNEA DOYLE



Art-a-Whirl festivities at the Casket Arts building in Minneapolis.
PHOTO: TASHA RAE TATRO

"Blossoms of Hope" bus shelter in Northeast Minneapolis by metal sculptor Marjorie Pitz.
PHOTO: JESSICA DAILEY

Johnson and Kauppila have studios in the Northrop King Building, as do fellow "metalsmith mavens" and jewelry designers Susan Elnora Frerichs (silver and gold skulls, insects, and skeletons), Betty Jäger (a goldsmith, 3 Jäg Design), and Judith Kinghorn, who recently won Best of Show at Craft2Wear at the Smithsonian Institution. Kauppila formerly worked with Steve Vincent at Studio Vincent. "Many designers like myself specialize in wedding rings," Johnson says. "They're a big part of our business." But, she adds, jewelry buyers in the Twin Cities "want to wear art on an everyday basis. They like jewelry that's artful, wearable, and handmade."

Jewelry makers including Sitarz, Sklar, and Sawyer have their studios in a former casket factory now called Casket Arts, also in Northeast. "The studio scene is so important here because there aren't a lot of galleries carrying metalwork and fine-art jewelry," Sawyer says. "Open studio events bring people right to the artists, and those people come with intelligent questions and inquiries about our work."

Another metalworker with a studio in Northeast is Lisa Elias, who came out of the University of Minnesota's art department. Elias creates functional sculptures inspired by traditional blacksmithing techniques and has fabricated public artworks throughout the Twin Cities. Her work includes thirty tree corrals and thirty bike racks with "the appearance of 1920s Art Nouveau metalwork," she says. She has also created artful railings for storm water gardens along the new Central Corridor Light Rail line; a 400-foot fence along Interstate 94 and Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis supporting and enhancing the Loring Bikeway Commuter Corridor; and *Canopy of Grass*, an arbor over Minnehaha Creek in the Minnetonka Mills Burwell Park.

Marjorie Pitz is a nationally renowned public artist who works in metal. Her sculpture *Blossoms of Hope* at the 5 Point Plaza in Northeast Minneapolis is a bus stop festooned with huge metal flowers. Marcia McEachron's wire and steel sculptures, and metal leaf benches, are also found at bus stops around the cities. A bridge that carries Third Avenue South over Interstate 94 in Minneapolis was designed with elements by Frank Lloyd Wright and includes a sculpture by Janet Lofquist constructed with a metal "warp and weft" matrix. The steel surface is illuminated from the inside, creating a mosaic of changing light, pattern, and color.

"Our diverse, thriving arts scene has created a community of consumers who really want to support local artists and business," Johnson says. "Metalworked jewelry is a growing part of that." When Sklar opened Metal Heart Jewelry seven years ago, he expected the students for classes would be retired baby boomers. Instead, he says, "I see a lot of young people getting involved, from ages 20 to 40, who have a lot of drive and excitement." He credits this partly to the growing "maker culture" of the Twin Cities, in which people learn such traditional, do-it-yourself skills as sewing, leather working, and metalsmithing, and apply those to artful pursuits. "We're going to see an explosion of creativity moving forward," Sklar continues. "People often ask the question: 'Can art save the world?' I think it already is doing that. Metalsmithing is something people have discovered in the Twin Cities that gives them a lot of joy, whether they're working the metal themselves or wearing someone else's artwork."

Camille LeFevre is a freelance writer and the editor of The Line *(thelinemedia.com), an online magazine about the creative economy of the Twin Cities.*

Deganit Stern Schocken
Shaped by the Land

BY DAVIRA S. TARAGIN

Pendant from "Kalandia Checkpoint" series, 2007
aluminum, silver, gold, diamonds
5 x 5"
PHOTO: URI GRUN

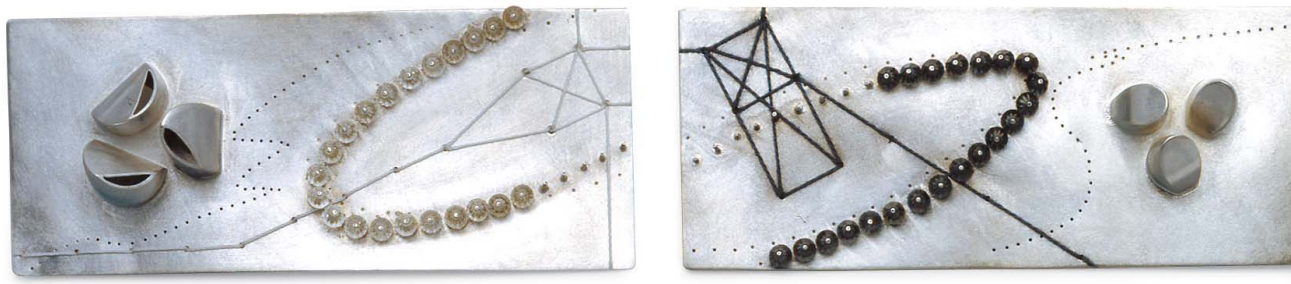
She feels a strong tie to the land—its geography as well as its political and social implications.

Body Piece, ca. 1996
silver
length 35 ⅛"
PHOTO: URI GRUN

WITHIN THE PAST decade, Deganit Stern Schocken's name has become synonymous with contemporary Israeli jewelry. She was featured in *Women's Tales: Four Leading Israeli Jewelers*, the first in-depth study of contemporary jewelry from Israel.[1] From 1998 until 2007, she founded and headed the jewelry department at Shenkar College of Engineering, one of the two leading schools for metalwork in Israel, which is located in Ramat Gan, a municipality adjacent to Tel Aviv. Today, Stern Schocken is spearheading a new, innovative, graduate level, interdisciplinary department at Shenkar, combining the study of jewelry, fashion, accessories, and textiles. She also established and actively participates in Inyanim, an artist collective, which seeks to provide ongoing encouragement to jewelry graduates from Shenkar and Jerusalem's Bezalal Academy of Arts and Design who are just entering the workplace.[2] Members of Inyanim—from the Hebrew word meaning "matters" or "issues of interest or concern"—meet regularly and organize conceptual exhibitions of their work for venues in Europe and the United States.

Stern Schocken's aesthetic and her approach to jewelry-making are very much formed by life in Israel, where jewelry, whether ethnic or brought by emigrants from North Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, or Europe, has been integral to the culture since the country's inception in 1948. Today, it remains a leading industry.

Stern Schocken spent her early life on Kibbutz Amir in northern Israel. She feels a strong tie to the land—its geography as well as its political and social implications. On the kibbutz, she learned the importance of sharing as well as the need to define the self. Teaching—at Bezalel (1985–89), Bloomfield College of Art and Design in Haifa (1991–96), and Shenkar (since 1995)—is her form of sharing. Discovering her own identity has been equally important. Following her study of architecture at Bezalel, Stern Schocken worked for a brief time in the office of the renowned Israeli



Landscape Brooch, 1996
silver, cotton thread, quartz
1 7/8 x 4 3/8 x 3/4" and 1 3/4 x 4 1/2 x 5/8"
PHOTO: MICHAEL TROPEA; COURTESY OF RACINE ART MUSEUM

Two Pools (Not Brooches), 1993
silver
1 1/2 x 2 3/4 x 1 5/8" and 1 1/2 x 2 3/4 x 1 7/8"
PHOTO: MICHAEL TROPEA; COURTESY OF RACINE ART MUSEUM

architect Moshe Safdie. Her marriage into the Schocken family—among Israel's major patrons of the early Modernist German architect Erich Mendelsohn—placed her in a world dominated by modern architecture. When her husband settled on an architecture career, Stern Schocken felt the need to find her own professional direction. On the recommendation of a friend, she chose to make jewelry. The family moved to London, where she studied jewelry design at the Sir John Cass School of Art from 1974 to 1976, and then at the Middlesex Polytechnic at the Hornsey School of Art from 1977 to 1978, after which she returned to Israel. Architecture, however, has remained the defining element of her aesthetic.

Anticipating by a number of years the recent concern in contemporary jewelry with mapping and geography, Stern Schocken noted in the 1990s: "I think of my jewelry as miniature architecture on the body. As a trained architect, I look at things from an aerial perspective and am fascinated by the strong 'urban landscape' that results when a connection between a piece of jewelry and a wearer is established."[3] This philosophy is reflected in such innovative works as *Body Piece,* ca. 1996, in which lengths of chain connected by fabricated elements are draped over the body to create elaborate compositions of "buildings" on the body's "landscape." Her statement could as well describe a subsequent series: metaphorical landscape brooches made with thread, stone, and silver, and hinting at defining territories. Mapping is an ongoing theme in Israel's recent history, and the series may mark Stern Schocken's first foray into political commentary.

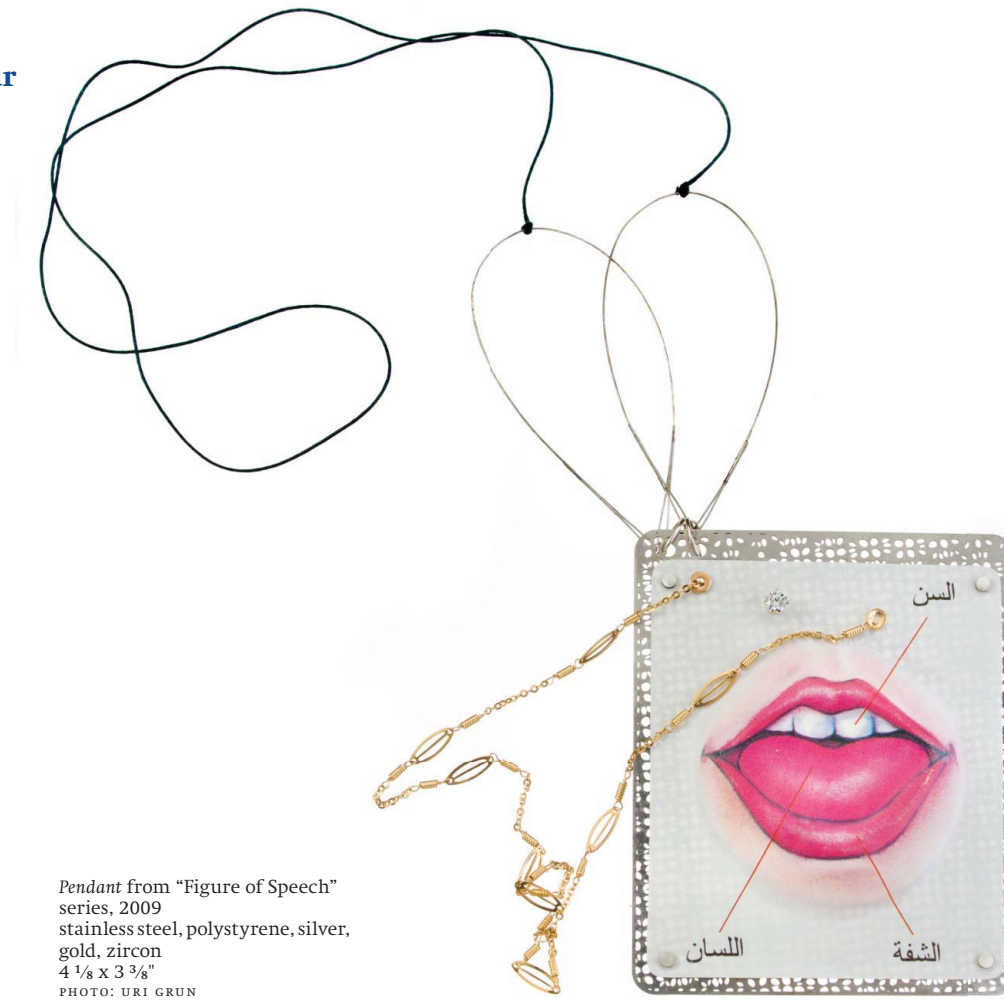
Stern Schocken continues to find inspiration in architecture. She sees parallels between the multilayered analysis of the environment by controversial Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas and her own approach to jewelry that combines wearability, physicality, movement, and concept. She is delighted that her early work has been compared to that of

Koolhaas's student and subsequent virtuoso in her own right, the Deconstructivist architect Zaha Hadid.

In reflecting on her forty-year career in the field, Stern Schocken determined that her work relates closely to developments in contemporary design, particularly the theory advanced by Serbian-born designer Branko Lukic, founding principal of the Nonobject Studio in Palo Alto, California. Although Stern Schocken believes that an affinity exists between her work and that of her close friend, former student, and fellow Israeli designer Ron Gilad, Stern Schocken now feels a stronger kinship with Lukic's approach. His theories are articulated in the book *Nonobject* (2011), co-authored with the design theorist and historian Barry M. Katz.[4] Like Lukic, Stern Schocken feels her oeuvre explores changes in perception that occur when the familiar and the known are transformed. Her starting point is, however, her life in Israel. In *Pools* (2006), for example, she explored settings and the role of gemstones, for which Stern Schocken often substitutes water, a precious commodity in Israel's arid climate. The works have been seen as related to Tel Aviv's Bauhaus-inspired White City, a collection of downtown districts whose rehabilitation since the 1970s has paralleled Stern Schocken's own development. Many of her early brooches and necklaces as well as some of the works in her recent "In the Air" series (2012–13), are based upon the Bauhaus rationalist aesthetic: traditionally insignificant functional elements such as clasps, hinges, spikes, and fabric serve as the focal points of these compositions.

In series such as "Kalandia Checkpoint" (2007), "Figure of Speech" (2009), and "In the Air," Stern Schocken used mundane found objects such as smashed aluminum cans salvaged from an army security checkpoint on the West Bank between Jerusalem and the city of Ramallah; inexpensive plastic language boards used to teach Arabic to children; and even sections from printed airplane safety instructions garnered during her frequent travels. Uniting them with gold, silver, and precious or semiprecious stones, she recontextualized them into wearable jewelry with a strong political, social, or cultural message. For example,

Stern Schocken feels her oeuvre explores changes in perception that occur when the familiar and the known are transformed.



Pendant from "Figure of Speech" series, 2009
stainless steel, polystyrene, silver, gold, zircon
4 1/8 x 3 3/8"
PHOTO: URI GRUN

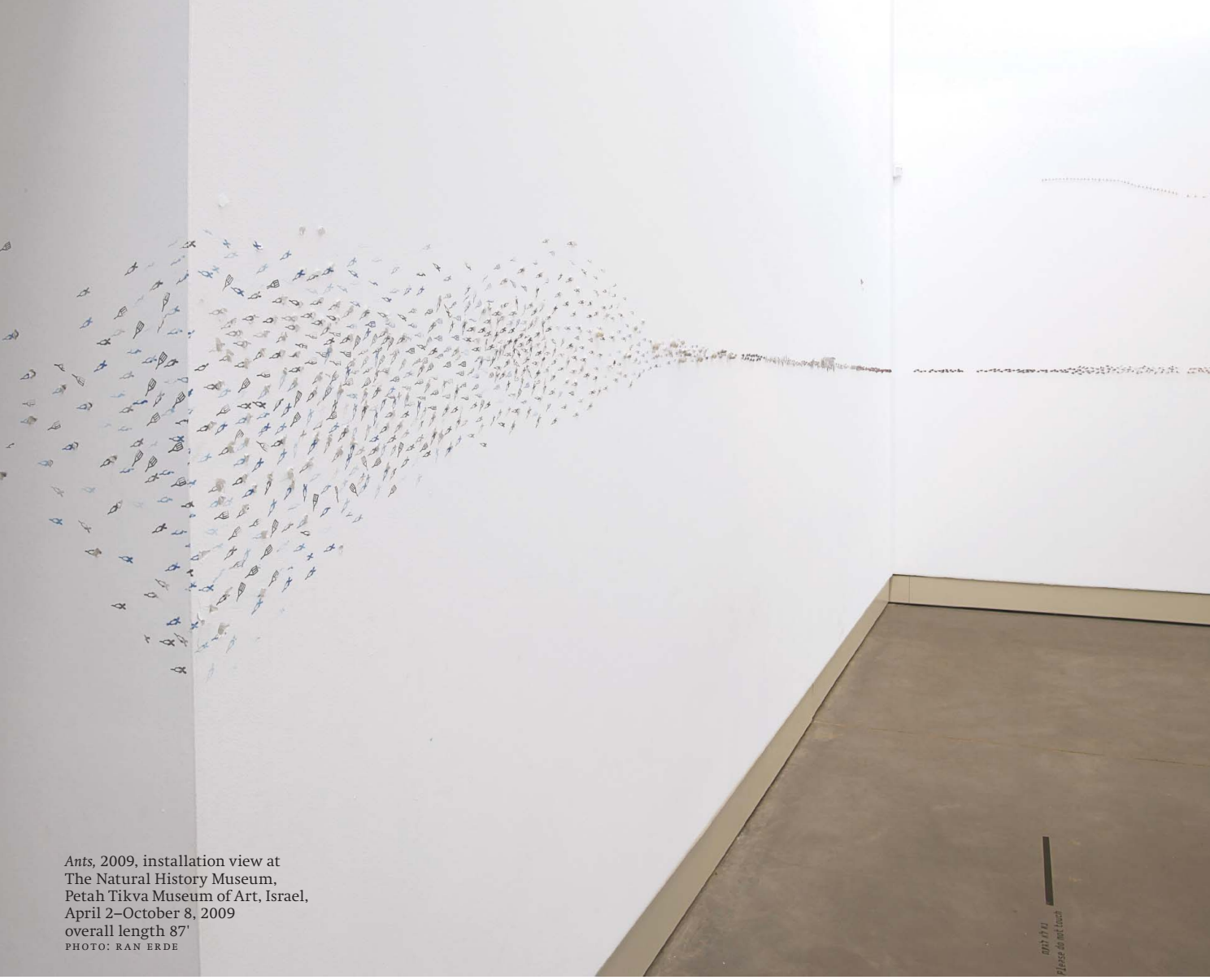
initially created for the 2007 fourth jewelry biennial exhibition "Heaven and Earth" at Tel Aviv's Eretz Israel Museum, "Kalandia Checkpoint" pendants were composed of crushed aluminum cans symbolizing Hell with the stones decorating them denoting Heaven.

"How Many Is One," 2002–3, her seminal work, provides new perspectives on a venerable technique of metalworking, lost-wax casting. Although parallels exist with Lukic's oeuvre since both artists deal with process, Stern Schocken feels that this body of work is analogous to Koolhaas's thoughts on urbanism, which he believes occurs spontaneously rather than through careful design.[5] While the intention within the jewelry industry is to use custom-made molds for the mass production of specific designs, here Stern Schocken's goal is to use industrial standbys—often old rubber molds of stone settings, chain links, and clasps—to produce one-of-a-kind objects. She makes new molds from these cast-off forms, retaining the variously sized channels, known as sprues and runners, through which the liquid material is introduced into the mold once the wax melts. Her new molds also preserve the margins formed by the wax that escapes when the two sides of the mold are not tightly sealed.[6] She retains these "mistakes or leftovers"[7] through the final casting process. Stern Schocken will then sometimes recast these metallic forms, creating additional hybrids by duplicating them or combining them with other similarly fabricated elements. The final forms are often then coated with colorful paint and embellished with stones.

When viewed singly, the final products, with their strong linear thrusts, recall trees, which play a vital role in making Israel's arid soil fertile. When grouped, they evoke the tightly juxtaposed medals worn on the chests of soldiers to demonstrate their bravery. Stern Schocken considers "How Many Is One"—which has assumed various formats ranging from environmental installations to wearable jewelry to nonfunctional vessels—to be her first attempt at making strong political statements.

"How Many Is One" became the basis for Stern Schocken's most successful installation to date. In *Ants*, created for the

How Many Is One, 2003–4
silver, paint, wax (forty-two pieces)
height range 5 ¼ - 1 ⅛"
PHOTO: MICHAEL TROPEA; COURTESY OF RACINE ART MUSEUM



Ants, 2009, installation view at The Natural History Museum, Petah Tikva Museum of Art, Israel, April 2–October 8, 2009
overall length 87'
PHOTO: RAN ERDE

2009 exhibition "The Natural History Museum" at the Petah Tikva Museum of Art in Israel, she encircled the walls of the museum's temporary exhibition space, above the midpoint, with bands of tiny, insect-like forms made from wax or silver castings of outdated molds of stone settings, chain links, and clasps. She juxtaposed these with stampings of the same forms applied directly to the wall and mirror-image cutouts made in the wall's surface. The result is a lively dialogue between positive and negative space. Some "ants" carry "food"—illegible pieces of folded and rolled paper cut from newspapers or the Bible. On one level, this is an environmental sculpture exploring the habits of these industrious, social creatures; on the other, it synthesizes Stern Schocken's interests in jewelry and architecture—evoking notions of a bejeweled belt girding the interior space.

Stylistically, whether it is jewelry or environmental sculpture, whether responding to architecture or making social and political statements, Stern Schocken's work pursues certain prevailing themes: a love of clean, precise line; concern with space; the relationship of the forms to the body; and the tension she tenaciously seeks by uniting unlikely materials. Influenced by her mother, a sculptor who also taught movement without music, Stern Schocken often incorporates movement in her work, whether through adjustable mechanisms that she has cleverly developed or by making the wearer an active participant in the arrangement of the composition on the body, tabletop, or wall. In relationship to the preponderance of mass in much contemporary jewelry, the elements she features are architectonic but often small and delicate.

"In the Air," Stern Schocken's most recent body of work to be seen in the United States, was unlike any other in the diverse ways the title came into play. One series of brooches recalls her early rationalist designs, but the gemstones and tiny found objects are literally suspended in the air as they spring from hinges, the building blocks of these

Pendant from "In the Air" series, 2012–13
stainless steel, polystyrene, silver
3 ½ x 3 ½"
PHOTO: URI GRUN

Brooch from "In the Air" series, 2012–13
stainless steel, silver, semiprecious stone
2 ⅜ x 1 ⅜"
PHOTO: URI GRUN

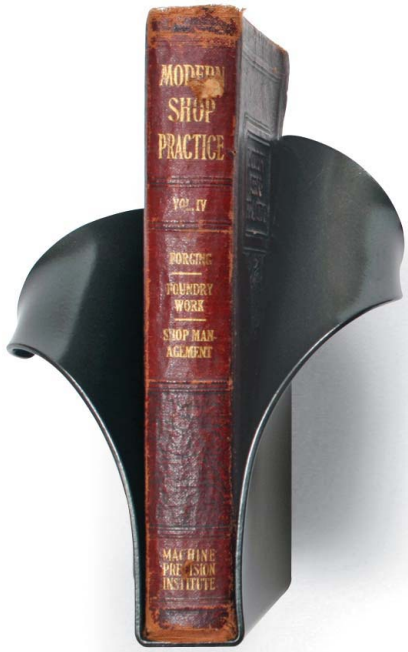
compositions. In pendants made from stainless steel, encased airplane security directions are a literal reference to flight as well as a play on the idea of "security." But, above all, the pendants fabricated from Xeroxes of masterpieces of art serve as reminders of this artist's fundamental preoccupation with concept. While formally they are reminiscent of Stern Schocken's earlier attempts to make an inexpensive multiple in the form of a brooch, in these thirteen double-sided pendants she chose to isolate and focus upon details from paintings by the seventeenth-century Spanish master Diego Velázquez, whose work she has revered for years. They remind wearer and viewer alike that ideas and sources of inspiration are everywhere "in the air."

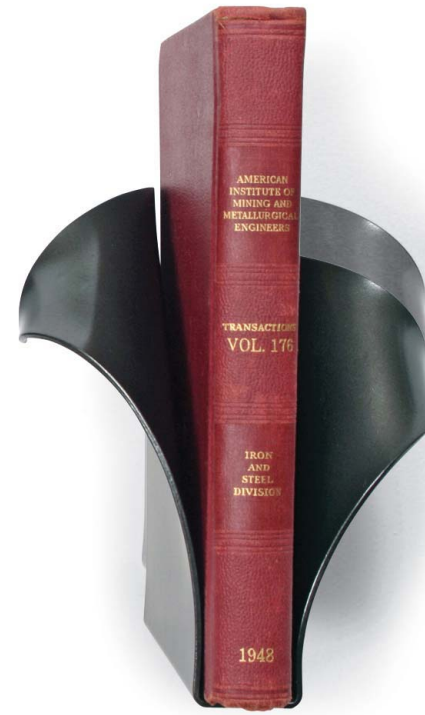
Formerly curator at The Detroit Institute of Arts and the Toledo Museum of Art, and director of exhibition at the Racine Art Museum, Davira S. Taragin is now consultative curator to the David Owsley Museum of Art, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana.

Author's note: This essay is based on conversations with Deganit Stern Schocken on June 13–14, 2013. The author wishes to thank Dale and Doug Anderson and the Association of Israel's Decorative Arts for making these interviews possible. For a compendium of writings on the artist, see Deganit Stern Schocken *(Montclair, NJ: Gallery Loupe, 2013).*

1. Davira S. Taragin and Alex Ward with Helen Drutt English, *Women's Tales: Four Leading Israeli Jewelers* (Jerusalem: Israel Museum; Racine, WI, Racine Art Museum, in association with Hudson Hills Press, 2006).
2. Iris Fishof and Deganit Stern Schocken,*"Inyanim" Group: No Problem(?)* (Israel: Inyamin Group, 2010).
3. "Deganit Stern Schocken," www.galleryloupe.com/artists, accessed September 2013.
4. Branko Lukic and Barry M. Katz, *Nonobject* (Cambridge, MA, and London: The MIT Press, 2011).
5. Deganit Stern Schocken, email to the author, October 8, 2013.
6. For a discussion of "How Many Is One," see Ellen Lupton, "Curated Exhibition in Print: Framing the Art of Jewelry," *Metalsmith* 27, no. 4 (2007): 22–23.
7. Stern Schocken, email to the author.

Andiron, 2010
steel
various dimensions





Book Sconces, 2008
steel
7 x 6 x 6"

Marc Maiorana
At the Edges

BY M. ANNA FARIELLO

Mirror, 2009
steel, mirror
28 x 16 x 2"

IF A GENERATION of blacksmithing has revealed anything, it is that common perceptions of craft are limited by our own preconceptions. Since the founding of the Artist Blacksmith's Association of North America in 1973 and the renaissance that followed, an international audience has come to see the application of blacksmithing tools against steel as a demonstration of possibilities. Certainly, the 1970s was influenced by traditionalists; younger smiths were eager to learn scrollwork and collaring, techniques thought to be "lost" since their heyday at the turn of the 20th century. In the 1980s and 1990s, more conventional techniques gave way to a visual style reminiscent of the sinuous and meandering Art Nouveau. For American blacksmiths, this design approach was innovative and exciting. Still, like their traditional predecessors, these forged elements relied on linear components formed from bar stock to achieve a lyrical style made popular by many. In the 2000s, blacksmiths expanded their repertoire once again by experimenting with billets and solid blocks of steel to produce massive shapes manipulated and compressed by heavy power tools and hydraulic presses. For a while, it looked as though the field had covered the full aesthetic spectrum of opportunities offered by ferrous metals manipulated by a wide range of smithing techniques. But now, as we move into the 21st century, smiths are expanding their collective range yet again.

Having begun as a professional smith in 2005, Marc Maiorana is stepping away from tradition to create innovative functional works that draw inspiration from a Modernist perspective. Characterized by seamless construction and clean lines, the work Maiorana produces, under the studio name of Iron Design Company, has an industrial feel. For these multiples, Maiorana prefers sheet steel to bar stock to create forms that are rolled over and flow back onto themselves to embrace concepts of containment and domestic use. Many of these works provide support for common domestic objects and incorporate their placement into their overall visual design. While Maiorana's pieces *physically* support books, firewood, wine bottles, and fruit, the insertion of these household objects appears to complete the artist's vision. Maiorana's *Book Sconce* is a case in point. Made from bent sheet steel, a fan-shaped sconce is complemented by the vertical line of the book it holds. In *Bend Coatrack*, made from steel and stainless steel, a horizontal element is fastened together with metal pegs that do double duty holding clothing or towels. Maiorana's *Center Piece* seems like an endless Mobius strip that envelopes the fruit it intends to serve up to its takers. Iron Design Company is fabricating new work and new approaches to the production of multiples while also demonstrating a firm understanding and appreciation of the eventual function these objects will serve.

Maiorana is stepping away from tradition to create innovative functional works that draw inspiration from a Modernist perspective.

Marc Maiorana's introduction to traditional ironwork came early. His father attended farrier

Center Piece, 2013
stainless steel
14 x 6 x 6"

Bend Coatrack, 2012
steel, stainless steel
34 x 8 x 4"

Mezzaluna, 2008
steel
5 x 4 x 1"

school to take up a second career shoeing horses when the family acquired a horse of its own. Living in rural Sussex County, New Jersey, Maiorana senior turned to more ornamental work and set up a coal-fired forge in the family garage. Maiorana recalls. "I got off the school bus, and Dad had lit his coal forge." That was when "things started to click." While still a teen, Marc Maiorana was able to absorb the fundamentals of blacksmithing, the mechanics and principles of forging, and the use of hammer and anvil. Although today's smiths may eschew the farrier's trade, techniques and tools are held in common despite the differences in final product.

While this familial influence may have lured him into working with metal, like most young people, Marc Maiorana had other ideas. Attending the School of Ceramics at Alfred University, he took up printmaking and ceramics before he began to incorporate metal into mixed media work. At Alfred, "slowly and slowly," he says, "I kept introducing ironwork into my projects. . . . As the year progressed, I turned in more and more ironwork. If you asked me to do a sketch, I was probably going to do it out of sheet metal. . . . I would take scrap out of the scrap bin. You name it, I was finding some way to incorporate some forged piece of iron into my projects."

Having attended Alfred for two years, Maiorana transferred to Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, where he completed a BFA. There he met Stephen Yusko, a graduate student at the time and, in 1999, he assisted Yusko in teaching a course at Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina. After finishing his degree in 2001, Maiorana honed his skills, spending the next three years as a resident smith at Penland. Like many artists, he thinks of his education as a "natural progression" as he took advantage of opportunities before him. He benefited from "exposure to foundation classes at Alfred, the exposure to different types of metalworking at Carbondale, the exposure to the craft world, and making a go of it full time from my Penland residency."

Maiorana's work—from the perspective of the audience—is definitely hands-on.

Since 2005, Maiorana has maintained a studio in Virginia where he makes both commissioned pieces and products under the Iron Design Company banner. His company has been a success in terms of design and product distribution. It his sold around the world, with placement in magazines, catalogues, and websites. His *Wine Rack*, for example, has shipped to Poland, the Netherlands, Italy, China, and Australia. More pieces are exported than are sold in the United States. This is no small achievement at a time when American-made products are often bypassed by foreign markets. With works that appear to be headed in the direction of manufacturing, I asked Maiorana if he was interested in having his work machine-produced. Admitting that he likes the industrial look, the designer-craftsman takes a "middle ground." While he aspires to take "a bigger role in design," he continues to want "a set of hands to make these things. As long as I can do that efficiently and make it profitable for the shop to make, and make it available at the right type of price point for the audience, then it's a win-win."

Speaking of audience, Maiorana commented on the different ways he interacts with buyers in selling various types of pieces. While commissions require a lot of interaction with the buyer, his modern design pieces

are sold anonymously, mostly online. Curiously, such human disconnect was part and parcel of Modernism in manifestations that played out in 20th-century art and society. In contrast to a 21st-century internet and its hands-off methods of distribution, Maiorana's work—from the perspective of the audience—is definitely hands-on. Rooted in function, this body of work connects to the world through individual appreciation and use in the home.

Like many other blacksmiths, Maiorana does architectural commissions as well and approaches these from the standpoint of design/build. In making an andiron, for example, he asked himself, "What does everyone think of when they think of an andiron?" With its function in mind, he wanted to achieve something dynamic and fluid. For *Renwick Gate,* which he built for the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery invitational exhibition, "40 under 40: Craft Futures," he aimed to create a form that responded to gravity. He draped linear elements into structural components, thus fulfilling his visual concept as well as the functional needs of the gate. Other notable exhibitions that featured Maiorana's work include "Iron: Twenty Ten," organized by the Metal Museum in Memphis, Tennessee, and "Iron: Forged Tempered Quenched" at the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft in Texas.

Maiorana has positioned himself along the full creative spectrum. Materials, maker, and audience are connected by virtue of the object they share. Valued in its raw form, conceived by mindful design, and bent by able hands, Maiorana's work dwells in another's world. There, the process of connection begins again. This is evident in the artist's interpretation of the mezzaluna (half-moon, in Italian), a common kitchen utensil. The small steel blade takes its name from its shape. Held in the user's hand and made to do its cutting, the half-moon blade mindfully reconnects its user to the raw material from which it is made.

In summing up his own work, Maiorana said, "My specialty is in coming up with new shapes, coming up with something a little different. . . . I've always been at the edges of trying things." He attributes that ability to create new pieces to the fact that he learned the basics—"the mechanics of forging, the principles of forging"—at a young age, at a time when his creativity was still unbridled. He recalls that he was able to "play" with materials and tools in the simplest of studios. "You learn to get by with what you have at hand," he said, "and what we had at hand was hammer, forge, and anvil." While this may have been a limitation for some, in many ways, for Maiorana, that limitation "kicked off the imaginative side," continually pushing his work in new directions and to the edges.

A former James Renwick Fellow of American Craft, M. Anna Fariello is a curator and scholar who has published on a variety of topics relevant to historic and contemporary craft.

This article is based on an interview with the artist on August 6, 2013.

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North Carolina School of Art Railing, 2010
steel
108 x 36"

Renwick Gate, 2011
steel, wood
60 x 42 x10"
COLLECTION SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN ART MUSEUM

Boris Bally
Brave 3 (necklace), 2013
27 x 16 x 1 5/8"
100 gun-triggers (steel), stainless cord, 925 silver, 750 gold (weapons courtesy Good4Guns Anti-violence Coalition, City of Pittsburgh, PA)
PHOTO: AARON USHER III

Recasting Gunmetal

Taking Aim at Violence

BY LUKE T. BAKER

James de Givenchy for Fonderie 47
Phoenix Cuff, 2012
AK-47 steel, diamonds, 18k rose gold

Below:
Philip Crangi for Fonderie 47
Custom Signet Ring, 2011
AK-47 steel, 18k white and rose gold, 18k gold leaf

AS ALL METALSMITHS and jewelers know, metal assumes many forms during its lifetime: from ore to ingot to what we tend to think of as the finished product. Even when hardened into one form, metal possesses the potential for flux, and materials in their "final state" can be repurposed and crafted into something new. Throughout history, goods made from precious metals were considered tangible incarnations of an individual's wealth. Tea services, flatware, or jewelry were "frozen assets" literally worth their weight in the silver or gold from which they were made. These objects were not only portable, but also mutable: able to be recast or retooled into newer styles or even converted back into currency if tough financial circumstances befell their owners.

Historically, war has proven a catalyst for campaigns to repurpose metals. Well-known instances of metals reappropriation include the 15th-century transformation of Michelangelo's bronze sculpture of Pope Julius II into a cannon, and Louis XIV's financing of a costly 1689 war with the proceeds from melted-down silver furniture from his Palace of Versailles. In the modern era, citizens on both sides of the Atlantic aided the war effort during World War II by limiting their consumption of metal goods and contributing metal products to scrap drives. Reclaimed tin, copper, aluminum, iron, and steel built tanks, ships, planes, field supplies, and artillery.

In the recent past, a number of jewelers and metalsmiths have taken an interesting approach to adaptive reuse when sourcing metal materials. Modernizing the Old Testament injunction from Isaiah to "beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks" these craftsmen transform actual firearms, ammunition, and other instruments of violence into works of beauty and benevolence. For some, on a personal level there is catharsis in reclaiming control over decommissioned guns, while others hope that by reusing firearms they will raise public awareness about gun violence and prevention. Still others see an opportunity to fund antigun programs in the developing world through jewelry sales, or they may simply enjoy working with such symbolically loaded and macabre materials. All of these artists produce work that makes us consider the potential of metal's alternate lives.

Part humanitarian enterprise, part luxury atelier, Fonderie 47 made a splash in 2011 when it launched a collection of jewelry produced with metals salvaged from firearms recovered from war-torn nations in Africa. Founder Peter Thum cut his teeth as a social entrepreneur in 2001 when he launched Ethos Water, a brand of bottled water that donates a fraction of its proceeds to securing safe drinking water for children. Fonderie 47 operates on a similar model, seeking to "fund the removal and destruction of AK-47s and other assault rifles from conflict zones," as well as programs to build prosperity and alternatives for young people in these regions. The material of choice for Fonderie 47 artisans is steel obtained from the melted down Avtomat Kalashnikova assault rifle, better known as the AK-47. The AK-47 constitutes a major share of the estimated 20 million assault rifles on the African continent and is even pictured on the flag of Mozambique. These guns, first developed in the 1940s in

Soviet Russia, are inexpensively produced and trafficked to African nations quite literally by the boatload, where they are available for far less money than anywhere else on earth. The AK-47's hardiness, straightforward operation, and ubiquity throughout Africa make it the weapon of choice for arming child soldiers and armies engaged in civil warfare.

Fonderie 47's offerings include lines by celebrity designers such as James de Givenchy and Philip Crangi, all working with reclaimed steel and other precious metals. The goods aren't cheap—items range from a $3,000 pendant to a $350,000 limited edition ultra-luxe watch—but each purchase funds the destruction of a specified number of assault rifles by enabling the efforts of Nobel Peace Prize–winning Mines Advisory Group, which oversees the confiscation and destruction of the weapons. To date, Fonderie 47 estimates it has facilitated the destruction of 34,000 African assault weapons—a small dent in the number of guns still circulating in nations like the Congo or Burundi, but a reduction they hope will drive up gun costs for those who wish to purchase them. In 2013 Thum launched Liberty United, a similar initiative that refashions illegal guns from American cities into designer jewelry, the proceeds from the sale of which are used to target gun violence.

Meanwhile, in upscale Greenwich, Connecticut, just eighty-five miles south of Colt Manufacturing's West Hartford firearm factory, another social entrepreneur is enlisting jewelry to get guns off the streets of America. Jessica Mindich founded Jewelry For a Cause in 2008 to raise money for schools and nonprofit organizations like the Red Cross. Recognizing the severity of gun violence in American urban centers, however, she soon partnered with the Newark Police Department (NPD) and shifted the focus of her mission. Jewelry For a Cause launched its "Caliber" line using reclaimed metals from shredded illegal guns collected by the Newark police. Although no longer produced with reclaimed gunmetal, each simple cuff, bangle, or cufflink is available in brass or steel (with a diamond inset option), and bears the serial number of one of the guns it helped destroy—by funding NPD gun buyback programs, where firearms are exchanged for cash with no questions asked. Mindich's venture has been so successful—they raised over $40,000 for Newark's police department in just over two months of sales—that she has already expanded the "Caliber" line to include brass cuffs, bangles and cufflinks made from bullet casings recovered from crime scenes in Pittsburg, California

Other metalworkers choose to work with reclaimed guns and ammunition, less for political reasons than because they have access to the materials or enjoy the ominous associations inherent in making art from deadly weapons. During World War I, the tradition of "trench art"—goods crafted by soldiers or POWs from available materials, often bullets and shell casings—flourished on battlefields and military bases, places where metal mortar shells were abundant. Highly collectible, trench art hammered and carved from mortar shells ranges from kitchsy ashtrays and replica airplanes and ships to refined Arts-and-Crafts style vases shaped from shell casings by master coppersmith Dirk van Erp in the early 20th century. After emigrating from the Netherlands to the San Francisco Bay Area around the turn of the century, Van Erp found work as a coppersmith at a naval shipyard in Vallejo. In his spare time, he hammered cylindrical artillery shells into beautifully bowing vases, some with dimpled surfaces and the original manufacturer's stamp still intact. Though Van Erp never served in the line of fire, his mortar-shell masterpieces make a graceful contribution to the canon of trench art and are some of the most desirable examples on the market today.

"I like strong art, and I create strong art, and it's the stuff I feed on," says metalworker Al Farrow, who creates spectacular if diminutive churches, mosques, synagogues,

Jessica Mindich
Brass Bangle with Diamond from "Caliber Collection"™, 2013
brass (shell casings from Newark Police Department), diamond

Shredded illegal guns collected by the Newark Police Department, to be mined for Jessica Mindich's "Caliber Collection"™

Dirk van Erp
Vases, ca. 1902–8
hammered brass shell casings
height tallest 13"

For Farrow, the notion of violence sanctioned in the name of God is inherently contradictory and fraught with ethical problems.

and religious objects made from hundreds of bullets, gun parts, lead shot, and even grenades. The ominous beauty of Farrow's small structures and somber reliquaries draws a sharp equation between violent conflict and world religions. Farrow's work suggests a continuity of violence between past and present, as modern-day religious crusades take the form of skirmishes in Israel and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. For Farrow, the notion of violence sanctioned in the name of God is inherently contradictory and fraught with ethical problems. Familiar forms from seemingly opposing worlds collide in Farrow's constructions, as banana-curved magazine clips from an assault rifle form the Gothic arch of a Christian cathedral. In another work, a realistic rendering of a bombed mosque, one side of the dome bears a gaping hole where a fictive explosive hit its mark. Farrow renders his sculptures safe for display in art museums by removing the gunpowder from bullets and detonating the primer (which sparks the propellant gunpowder). Many of the guns he works with are obtained by donations from around the world.

John D. Ricker is a sculptor and self-taught metalworker, who has been working with weapons voluntarily surrendered by his local community for more than twenty-five years. Ricker's peace activism began in the Bay Area, with mobile "gun bakes," where area residents could bring in any unwanted or illegal firearms—no questions asked—and proffer them to Ricker's portable forge. Ricker used the destroyed guns to cast metal objects to benefit neighborhoods ravaged by gun violence, such as a 1996 bench installed in San Francisco's Precita Park to commemorate a pair of teenagers shot and killed there, or the bike racks in front of San Francisco's City Hall, cast from 75 semiautomatic weapons. His *Gun Coffin*, finished in 2008, comments more explicitly on the deadly toll of gun violence in America. Ricker toured this cagelike lattice of 125 hammer-flattened guns and munitions to Washington DC, where he witnessed firsthand its profound impact on veterans in particular. Now based in Portland, Oregon, Ricker remains committed to anti-violence activism. Through his organization Bang Bang Metal Works, Ricker aims to train veterans, childhood abuse survivors, and others traumatized by violence in basic metalworking techniques. Soon, his neighborhood gun bakes will resume, and local citizens will have a chance to take a few cathartic swings with a sledgehammer at a red-hot gun, smashing the weapon to smithereens and taking comfort in knowing that one fewer gun can wreak destruction in their community.

Based in Providence, Rhode Island, jeweler and metalsmith Boris Bally artfully "upcycles" materials, from street signs to found metals, repurposing and transforming familiar objects into new contexts. In firearms, Bally has found a rich source of material with ample social symbolism. His sculpture *Gun Totem* (2001), a concrete totem pole infused with over 1,000 guns reclaimed from the streets of Pittsburgh (the artist's hometown), suggests America's reverence for the firearm as a talisman of destructive power. Installed across from the Federal Courthouse in Providence, the totem, bristling with rusty gun carcasses for the public to see and touch, seems to admonish the state's legislative and judicial leadership to push harder for gun control laws. Bally has also created wearable art from gun parts, including the *Jabberwocky* brooch from 1999 and *Brave #3* neckpiece from 2013, each made from gun triggers, precious metals, and stones. Boris views these pieces

Al Farrow
Bombed Mosque, 2010
guns, gun parts, bullets, steel
40 x 56 x 34 π inches
PHOTO: JOCK MCDONALD; COURTESY THE ARTIST AND CATHARINE CLARK GALLERY

The alchemal metalworkers in this essay transform guns from objects of violence into works for peace, contemplation and civic betterment.

as having apotropaic qualities that protect the wearer from gun violence.

In 1996, an engaging artistic dialogue about the role of guns in Connecticut's history and present took place at Hartford's Wadsworth Atheneum—in a juxtaposition that ultimately aimed to put guns back on the city's streets, albeit in a new and nonviolent way. The Wadsworth-curated exhibition "Sam and Elizabeth: Legend and Legacy of Colt's Empire" explored the historical marriage between the city of Hartford and the gun industry, commemorating the Colt family. Colt's 1845 invention and mass-production of the repeating revolver changed forever the cultures of warfare and industrialized production in America. The Colt 45 revolver also had a huge impact on the city of Hartford, whose civic institutions—including the Wadsworth—were endowed in part by Colt's fortunes. Offering a contemporary counterpoint to the exhibition, artist Bradley McCullem displayed 228 custom-designed city manhole covers outside the museum for the duration of the Colt exhibition. Cast from seized illegal guns, they provided poignant commentary on the continuing and often tragic relationship between the citizens of Hartford and firearms. Each manhole cover is stamped with the message "made from 172 pounds of your confiscated guns" and bears Colt's Latin motto, which translates "He Who Suffers Conquers." Audio testimonials from victims and others whose lives have been touched by gun violence played near the installation of stacked metal plates. By tying the history of handguns in America to Colt (along with the rise and deleterious decline of Hartford's manufacturing economy), McCullem's project put gun violence in context, while the replacement manhole covers emblazoned with the weight of the guns destroyed provides a metric for change that Hartford's citizens can appreciate.

In war-ravaged Cambodia, British artist Sophie Constable (distantly related to 18th-century artist John Constable) runs Peace Art Cambodia Project (PACP). Founded in 2003, PACP puts deadly weapons, many of them AK-47s or M16 assault rifles, left over from the brutal Khmer Rouge regime into the hands of local students, who in turn weld and forge them into monuments and works of sculpture. Initially, dealing with the surfeit of weapons leftover after warfare ceased in 1998 was a challenge for the Cambodian government, though to date, hundreds of thousands of weapons have been recouped from Khmer caches and civilians alike. Public bonfires of decommissioned weapons, their stocks piled like haystacks, boosted public morale but wasted materials that Constable felt could be used instead to make art. Through donations of confiscated weapons and financial sponsorship (actress Angelina Jolie has been among the program's supporters), PACP was able to set up a workshop for art students at Phnom Penh's Royal University of Fine Arts, where they were trained in basic metalsmithing techniques and created their first sculptures from a hoard of 876 weapons. In 2004, a second course was offered where the students developed advanced skills, such as metalworking for furniture design, and manipulating metals in a forge. The students' creations, which ranged from human and animal figures to rocking chairs and candelabras and even a working bicycle, were exhibited throughout Cambodia, and some traveled to Australia for display. Two students were later commissioned to produce a large-scale *Bird of Peace* sculpture for the Australian Embassy in Phnom Penh.

Despite their precision-engineered design (often for a specific purpose, such as a sniper rifle or a highly concealable

Bradley McCallum
Manhole Cover Project: A Gun Legacy, 1996
public sculpture, testimonials
Installation view at Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut

Manhole Cover Project: A Gun Legacy
1996 (detail)

Steven Saracino
Columbine Survival Bracelet, 2004
(disassembled and assembled)
sterling silver, mokume gane
8 x 6 x 3"
PHOTO: K. C. KRATT

Beretta pistol), present-day guns remain absent from every American museum of design or contemporary art. Some, like New York's Museum of Modern Art, have an institutional policy that prohibits their acquisition. Art made from guns, however, is seeing increasing institutional support and attention. In 2002, the British Musuem in London made headlines with the acquisition of Mozambique-born artist Cristóvão Canhavato's *Throne of Weapons* (2002), a chair made entirely of reclaimed weapons manufactured all over the world and used in Mozambique during a civil war that claimed over a million lives. In 2005, Canhavato, who works as part of an artist collective in which he is known as Kester, was commissioned by the museum to create another welded gun sculpture, *The Tree of Life*, which stands almost 12 feet tall and is fabricated with guns collected from Mozambique villagers in exchange for goods including sewing machines, farming tools, and bicycles.

Other artists have gun-based works in museum collections (Boris Bally's *Brave #2* necklace is in the collection of the Museum of Arts and Design, New York), or solo exhibitions of work made with weapons (Al Farrow exhibited his religious objects and sculptures at San Francisco's De Young Museum in 2008). This fall, the Society for Contemporary Craft in Pittsburgh opened "ENOUGH Violence: Artists Speak Out," an exhibition that responded to the upsurge of gun violence in America in recent years. One of the show's fourteen featured contemporary artists was Steven Saracino, a metalsmith, jeweler, and design professor. Saracino's *Columbine Survival Bracelet* was made in response to the NRA's suggestion that had law-abiding students at Columbine been armed they might have been able to prevent the tragedy that left fifteen dead and twenty-one wounded. Saracino's outsize piece is composed of two revolvers, made of sterling silver and *mokune gane* layered metal, pointing at one another, their butts mounted in a decorative base. To wear the 8-by-6-inch "bracelet" seems impractical and absurd—Saracino's comment on the NRA suggestion that gun violence can be prevented with more guns.

The alchemal metalworkers in this essay transform guns from objects of violence into works for peace, contemplation and civic betterment. They represent just a selection of the international jewelers and metalsmiths who confront gun violence with their art. Those who work with metal over any other medium, however, can perhaps best appreciate its capacity to shift forms and be literally recast into something new. By presenting ways to forge beauty out of a legacy of destruction, these artists reinvigorate their audiences with a sense of agency over violence. As they morph guns from objects designed for killing into art, the collective hope is to see a similar shift in global attitudes about guns and their place in contemporary culture.

Luke T. Baker has written about visual and material culture for the Museum of Modern Art and several publications including Art Papers, Modern, *and* Antiques.

Pin, 2005
18k, silver, spectrolite
2 ⅛ x 2"
PHOTO: BILL SANDOVAL

Harold O'Connor: Between Art and Nature

BY ANDREA DINOTO

Nordic Skies, 2011
24k and 18k gold, silver, spectrolite
diameter 2 3/8"
PHOTO: HAROLD O'CONNOR

IN THE SPRINGTIME, a burly Irishman travels from his Rocky Mountain home in Salida, Colorado, to Le Arti Orafe, the prestigious jewelry school in Florence, Italy. He's come to teach a workshop on the centuries-old art of granulation, a process in which minute grains of gold are fused to metal to create a distinctive surface decoration.[1] The man, Harold O'Connor, an American-born, award-winning art jeweler whose career spans five decades, has long been acknowledged internationally as a master of the skill, as well as that of reticulation, another demanding method of surface texturing accomplished with a pinpoint flame on metal.[2] He brings artful, effortless exactitude to these tasks, sprinkling golden grains fine as pollen dust over hand-wrought crinkled silver landscapes designed as wearable art.

O'Connor is used to cries of "But you make it seem so easy!" from struggling students who fill the frequent Dunconnor Workshops he conducts every year around the country—and in any far-flung location he's invited to.[3] Among the most accomplished metalsmiths of his or any generation, O'Connor enjoys a dual reputation as both artist and esteemed teacher.[4] His jewelry resides in seventeen museum collections worldwide[5]—and he has taught and lectured in sixteen countries, including Korea, New Zealand, the Czech Republic, and Japan. O'Connor was trained in the European metalsmithing tradition, but his body of work—over 2,000 pieces, he estimates—is in no way bound to classical design; instead, he incorporates traditional techniques within his own unique forms and compositions. O'Connor's approach is, admittedly, conceptually free-wheeling—often abstract, at times narrative, primitive, or even daringly humorous, as in witty visual puns served up, without irony, in 18k gold.

O'Connor draws inspiration from nature, ancient cultures, found objects, his immediate environment, and his entire lived life.

O'Connor draws inspiration from nature, ancient cultures, found objects, his immediate environment, and his entire lived life. He also cites the formal influence of renowned sculptors such as David Smith, Isamu Noguchi, Anthony Caro, and Eduardo Chillida; and in fact, O'Connor's jewelry has a sculptural sensibility. Working from sketches, he builds each piece as a three-dimensional art object that occupies space with as much authority as it graces the body. His intuitive approach produces one-of-a-kind pieces, usually within a particular theme—but never two alike. (He rarely, if ever, makes earrings, he says, because "you have to make two of them.") O'Connor favors brooches and rings, always wearable forms suited either to abstract or narrative styles. He might incorporate nonprecious materials like wood, bone, or amber into works of silver and gold, or he might opt for metal exclusively, combining several techniques into a single piece to produce the unique and complex surfaces that give his work its distinctive style. In addition to granulation and reticulation, O'Connor uses embossing to achieve a subtle form of surface patterning, accomplished when metal is fed through a rolling mill together with handmade Japanese paper.

All three techniques—embossing, granulation, and reticulation—are employed to exquisite effect on a single boldly scaled pendant titled *Wind From the East*, in which a matte gold-on-silver embossed disk is inset with a shallow, silver shadow box that frames a low-relief "image." O'Connor

Wind From the East (pendant), 2009
l8k and 24k gold, silver
diameter 3"
PHOTO: HAROLD O'CONNOR

wields his technique with astonishing virtuosity: the reticulated silver surface has been covered with minute granulation in the shape of a fern with radiating fronds that shimmer as if touched with golden dew. The understated elegance of this piece represents just one of O'Connor's many disparate styles and creative modes.

In contrast, there are two dissimilar series—made decades apart—that grew out of his explorations of areas near his home: the long-abandoned tracks of the Union Pacific railroad and Colorado's many derelict mining camps. For the 2003 railroad series, O'Connor used bits of metal found along the tracks—in his words, "remnants of bygone days"—but indirectly. His experimental method was to "put objects on a copy machine and reduce them in size to an actual piece of jewelry." He then remade them, as in *Rusted Remnants Between the Tracks* where he reproduced a piece of perforated rusted metal in gold and silver, combining the ragged forms with iridescent spectrolite to create a wholly abstract, tricolor composition. For the mining series, made in the late 1970s, his innovative approach was to photograph abandoned structures and equipment—mine headers, boilers, a stamping mill, coal breaker, and such—and use the 1 x 1-inch, 35 mm slide images as a basis for low-relief renderings in 18k gold. For added realism, he re-created in gold and in miniature the massive seven-strand cable used by miners, which he incorporated into these and later designs to embody both the roughness and romance of this fabled era. Writing of the series in *Ornament* magazine, Robert K. Liu observed that these "golden sculptures . . . completely integrated technique and content . . . [and] art has been abstracted from machines."

As he relates to his physical environment, nothing is lost on O'Connor, whose 2010 "Backyard Muses" series included a choice bit of detritus: a vintage, used-up zinc toothpaste tube which he mounted above a common river stone for a funky, yet strangely elegant brooch. He also made castings of his garden's grapevine twigs to provide graphic, linear elements for assemblages with leather, silver, amber, and spectrolite.

After the death of his father in 1982, O'Connor was moved to produce a series that played with the concept of time, each piece a visual pun rendered as a scene or object and functioning as a ring or wearable "watch" attached to a leather band. One such timepiece is *Conference Time* (1992), the watch face a round conference table peopled by ten tiny figures cast in gold from plastic N-gauge train figures. Another, *Neighborhood Watch* (1992), is hinged like a locket and opens to reveal facades of houses with their tiny owners literally keeping watch—an image that might be a precious form of folk art, its surfaces agleam with granulation. A *Serving Time* (1992) ring made for the series takes the form of a tiny dining table complete with a sushi platter, chopsticks, and rice bowl!

O'Connor's exposure to Japanese gardens prompted evocations of that restrained, contemplative aesthetic. Embossing, reticulation, and granulation are all employed, together or singly, in pieces that range from an

Rusted Remnants Between the Tracks (brooch), 2005
24k and 18k gold, silver, spectrolite
2 ⅛ x 1"
PHOTO: HAROLD O'CONNOR

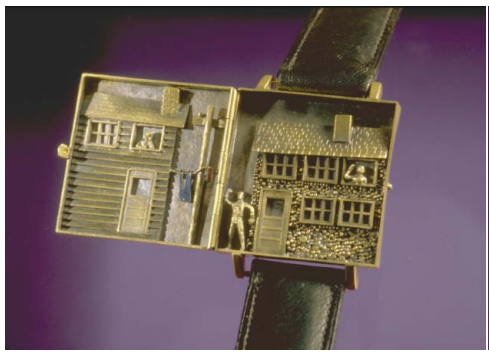
Brooch from "Backyard Muses" series, 2008
found toothpaste tube, beach pebble, silver
1 ⅛ x 2"
PHOTO: HAROLD O'CONNOR

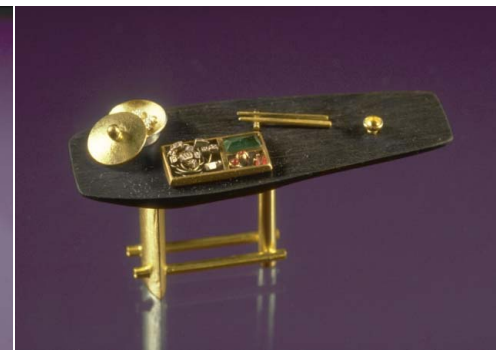
From the Grape Vine (pendant), 2008
18k gold, silver, spectrolite
2 x 2"
PHOTO: HAROLD O'CONNOR

impressionistic rendering of Mt. Fuji to a magnificent necklace of Japanese river stones, each inlaid with a gleaming rivulet of granulation. Negative space and abstract calligraphy, together with miniature versions of tea-house constructions—a garden gate, for example—are all part of O'Connor's self-described "meandering" through the Japanese garden aesthetic. In several of these pieces, he produces subtle surface coloration through the use of *shakudo* and *mokume-gane*, age-old techniques that exploit the beauty of alloys and mixed-metal lamination respectively.

What becomes apparent in viewing O'Connor's oeuvre is that every piece of jewelry, every theme and variation, exists as a touchstone to some experience or event in what has been a peripatetic life.[6] He has traveled widely as a student, exhibiting artist, and teacher, and is always a keen observer of diverse cultures and the natural world. Born in Utica, New York, he studied anthropology at the University of New Mexico, but in his senior year a course in metalwork so engaged him that he quit school six credits shy of graduating to pursue the field full-time. He was accepted at craft schools in Denmark, then Finland, and finally Germany, where he studied classical metalsmithing under Klaus Ulrich and Reinhold Reiling at the Hochshule für Gestaltung, in Pforzheim. O'Connor calls that year, which culminated with a summer session in Austria, "the foundation of my life's work," citing the new European emphasis on jewelry as an art form, with concept as the primary engine, but not at the expense of execution. Returning to the States, O'Connor was the first resident metalsmith at the Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina. From there he headed west to Crested Butte, Colorado, something of a forced stop: "The Volkswagen bus broke down so that's where I landed." O'Connor set up a studio in a coal shed, but since he hoped to teach eventually, he went back to the University of New Mexico, earning a BUS degree in 1971. He soon realized, however, that to teach on the college level he needed a post-graduate degree, and he

He always returned to metal, his passion, with gold being central to his work.





Neighborhood Watch, 1992
1 ⅛ x 1 ⅛" (closed)
silver, titanium, 18k gold, leather
PHOTO: HAROLD O'CONNOR

Japanese Dinner (ring), 1992
silver, 18k gold, ebony, rubies, emerald, palladium
1 ½ x ¾ x 1"
PHOTO: HAROLD O'CONNOR

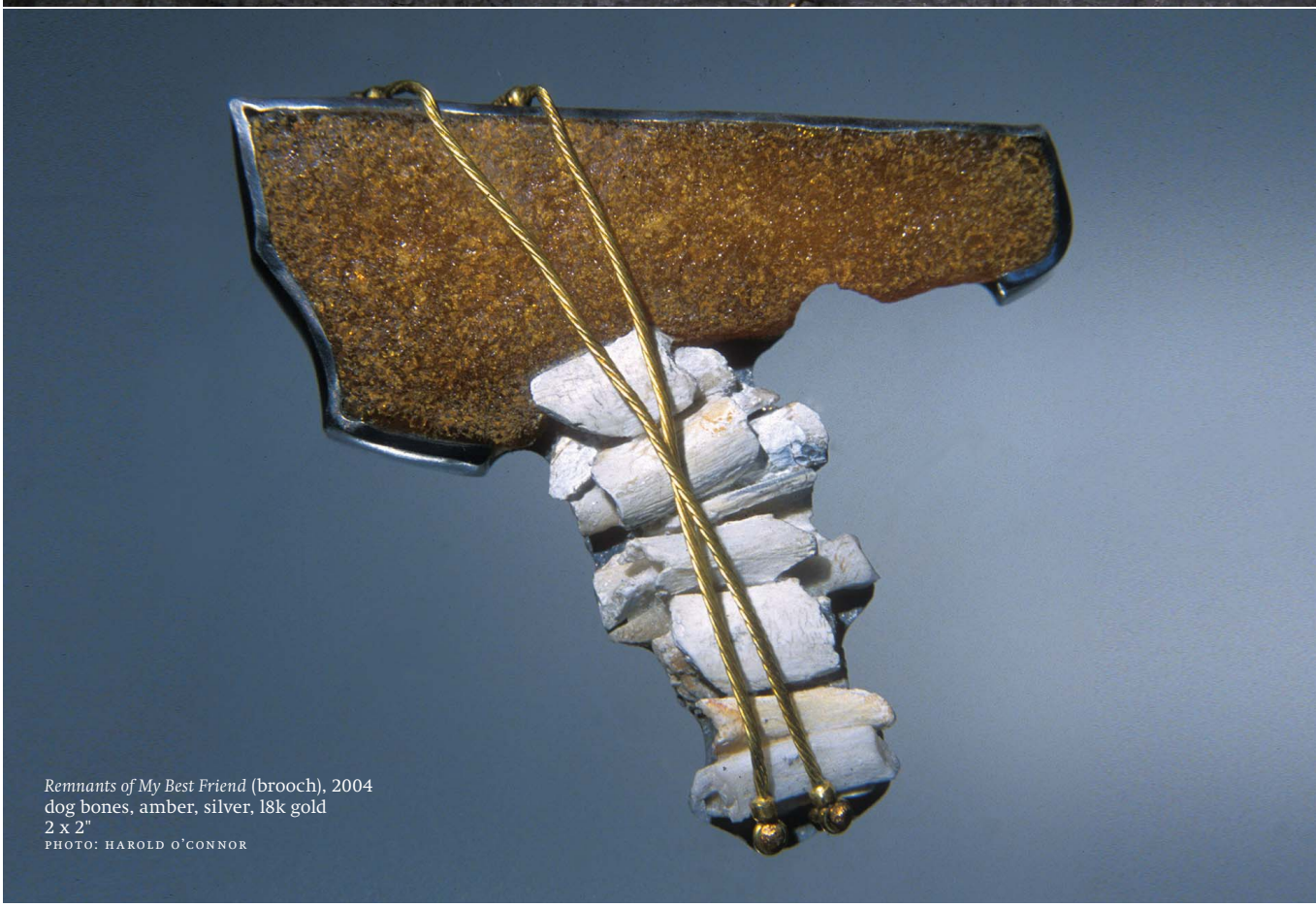
obtained an MFA from the Instituto Allende in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, then took a job teaching jewelry design and metalsmithing at the Alberta College of Art and Design in Calgary, Canada. After two years, he left and began giving workshops in Canada, before returning to Crested Butte where he ran summer schools and workshops, activities that continue to help support his art to this day. In 1978 he moved to Denver, finding a "strong, supportive arts community," but, ever restless and seeking creative stimulation, he headed for Taos, New Mexico, in 1986, where he worked for eight years, relishing the town's community of artists and the ability to exhibit at the local galleries. O'Connor still refers to Taos as "my sacred place." Ultimately, however, the Taos experience proved distracting, and in 1993 he moved to Salida, where he can recharge creatively in the town's quiet and isolation between the frequent workshops he teaches—as many as twelve per year.

At the start of his career, O'Connor, like other emerging art jewelers, explored new materials, such as titanium and cast resins, and experimented with then-new processes of photo-etching and electroforming. But he always returned to metal, his passion, with gold being central to his work. He makes his own alloys in order to control the color variations that give his pieces their particular richness, especially in combination with silver. Spectrolite, the stone he discovered and fell in love with during his first trip to Finland, and uses almost exclusively, provides a dramatic color element to many of his brooches, its surface flashing from black to deep iridescent blue according to the light. His unusual settings for the stone include piercing, strapping, and suspension between spiculae, the lightweight tapering tubes of gold he uses in many Asian-inflected compositions.

When O'Connor introduces nonprecious or found materials to his work—bone, most dramatically, but also wood or even small geodes—it is always in partnership

Out of the Woods (brooch), 1997
deer vertebrate, 24k and 18k gold, silver
2 x 2"
PHOTO: HAROLD O'CONNOR

Up From the Deep (pendant), 2010
fish vertebrate, blue coral,
24k and 18k gold, silver
4 x 7"
PHOTO: HAROLD O'CONNOR



Remnants of My Best Friend (brooch), 2004
dog bones, amber, silver, l8k gold
2 x 2"
PHOTO: HAROLD O'CONNOR

with gold or silver, the latter acting as structure or embellishment. For his geode rings, O'Connor encases the rough outer shell in textured silver and clusters granulation within the crystalline interior so that rock and gold combine to form an altogether new jewel. Bone, organic in substance and prehistoric as a jewelry material, provides both formal and chromatic qualities to pieces that might be ritual objects from ancient cultures. For a dramatic fishbone pendant with a 7-inch rib span, he applied a radiating cluster of granulation to the vertebral core to create a golden eye within an organic vortex. Similarly, a brooch made from his own dog's stark-white cremated bones, bundled with golden cable and paired with silver and amber, suggests a totemic object expressive of loss, myth, and memory. Commenting on similar work, David Revere McFadden, former chief curator at the Museum of Arts and Design, has noted that O'Connor's "jewels float with grace and splendor somewhere between nature and art."[7]

The artist's ability to span worlds and juggle many disparate themes at once will become even more complex as he considers a new direction: architecturally inspired form, using elements from the urban landscape as his starting point. Meanwhile, he's at work on a commission for a collector—a former student—who requested O'Connor's thumbprint in silver, with every whorl outlined in gold granulation. "Fine," said O'Connor, typically unfazed. He explains that the piece, currently on his workbench, will be a ring in gold with spectrolite. Speculating on what the piece might mean to the wearer, he offers this explanation: "I guess it's like having part of your instructor with you all the time." Put another way, any jewel by O'Connor carries his unmistakable imprint—a unique melding of nature, art, and supreme craft.

Andrea DiNoto is a New York-based writer on art and design.

1. A granulated surface can produce a pebbled effect, or, when the granules are flattened, something more akin to pavé, often a preference among modernist jewelers. O'Connor employs both approaches throughout his work.
2. His awards include YES Jewelry Award, Stebro 99, State Gallery of Art, Legnica, Poland (2000). He was elected member, International Guild of Master Craftsmen, London, England (1982); and received a Certificate of Merit, University of Fine Arts, Lavoro, Italy (1982).
3. O'Connor coined the term *Dunconnor* for his workshops and publishing activities: *dun* is Gaelic for fort, thus Dunconnor translates as the Fort of Connor.
4. He is the author of five self-published books on metalsmithing, including the best-selling *The Jeweler's Bench Reference*, in print under his own Dunconnor imprint since 1977.
5. Among the museum collections that include his work are: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Renwick Gallery at the Smithsonian Institution; Goldsmith's Hall, London; Victoria & Albert Museum, London; National Ornamental Metal Museum, Memphis, TN; the German Goldsmiths Society, Hanau; State Art and Work School, Pforzheim, Germany.
6. Harold O'Connor, oral history interview by Dinah Zieger, October 11 and 31, 2007, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Certain quotes in this essay are drawn from O'Connor's reflections on his life, work, and travels.
7. David Revere McFadden et al., *Harold Thomas O'Connor: Between Nature and Art*, trans. Marta Kionowska, exh. cat. (Legnica, Poland: Galeria Sztuki w Legnicy, 2001).

Arial Landscape (brooch), 2012
l8k gold, silver, red gold, shibuichi, spectrolite
1 ½ x 1 ¾"
PHOTO: HAROLD O'CONNOR

Ring, 2011
l8k gold, silver, agate geode
1 x ¾"
PHOTO: BILL SANDOVAL

Print of the Maker (ring), 2011
silver, 18k gold
1 x ¾ x 1 ⅛"
PHOTO: BILL SANDOVAL

Reviews

"Dashi Namdakov: The Nomad--Memory of the Future"

The National Arts Club,
New York
June 16–30, 2013

by Andrea DiNoto

The Siberian-born sculptor/jeweler/graphic artist Dashi Namdakov is a storyteller at heart. His remarkable cast, stamped, and patinated bronze figures—ranging in size from tabletop-small to monumental—immediately suggest exotic themes and narratives that could be drawn from mythic and fantastical traditions. In fact, the animals, shamans, women, and warriors he creates in three dimensions might easily be understood as the dramatis personae of only-to-be-imagined tales and legends in the mode of *Lord of the Rings* or *Star Wars*, albeit Asian-inflected. Which is not to imply that Namdakov's intricately modeled work is in any way childlike. It's just that his figures are so specifically characterized that any one of them would fit easily into either epic saga or fairytale. *Fantasy* (2013), a stylized princess-like figure astride a richly caparisoned horse, provokes us to wonder who she is and what her fate might be. In addition, the expressive faces and dynamic poses of Namdakov's figures exude a quality of animation we've come to expect from a wide range of fantasy literature, including cinema and graphic illustration.

Fantasy, 2013
bronze
20 x 50 x 15 ¾"

While the freestanding bronzes best display the artist's considerable talents as modeler and creator of characters-in-search-of-an-author, his jewelry, rendered mainly in high-karat gold and precious stones, falls more easily into the realm of ancient archaeological artifact. *Taurus* (2004), a haunting masklike pendant made of cast gold and fossilized mammoth tusk, offers a timeless gaze from Asian eyes that might be the artist's own. Here, as with the figural work, the artist demonstrates his uncanny ability to suggest a narrative we'll never know. *Lion* (2007), a ring of cast gold, features a full-faced, four-legged beast roaring with a mouthful of diamonds sunk, pavé-like, into the metal—the deliberate crudity of the form suits Namdakov's funky take on modern gem setting. Did an ancient king wear it as a sign of power and authority?

The artist, as the show's catalogue tells us, draws directly on his multicultural heritage for his forms and imagery. Central to his personal mythology is the 13th-century Mongol chieftain Genghis Khan, who succeeded in uniting the nomadic tribes of northeast Asia to form the far-reaching Mongol Empire. The great Khan—memorialized here as a brooding seated figure—seems to have suggested the title for this exhibition and inspired the many warrior figures; but on another level, "nomad" surely alludes to the artist's own exploration of the roots of his complex cultural history, one that includes both spiritual and craft-based traditions, including blacksmithing and jewelry.

Namdakov was born in 1967, in Transbaikal, the borderlands between Russia and Mongolia, an area where Buddhism and Siberian shamanism continue to coexist, and where the Scythian-Siberian animal style of art flourished, starting in the 7th century B.C. Magnificent among Namdakov's animal sculptures is *Mother* (2007), an attenuated, vaguely feline

Lion, 2007
gold, diamonds, rubies, saphires
1 ¾ x 1 ¼ x ¾"

body, over a yard long, holding a cub in her mouth while another clings to her side. The graceful S-curve of her body echoes Scythian ancestors while the emaciation of legs and teats channels Giacometti. Namdakov's skill at melding ancient and modern forms can be seen as well in the monumental *Amazon* (2010) in which a stylized woman's head, with Deco-esque lines, emerges from a helmet in the form of an open-mouthed fanged beast.

Namdakov's bronzes are cast exclusively at a foundry in Rome, the only place, he feels, capable of producing the work's surface refinement, complexity of form, mass, and detail. He has exhibited internationally since 2000, in group and solo shows at the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, the Beijing World Art Museum, the Grand Palais in Paris, and Tibet House in New York. He is the only living artist to have had a solo exhibition in the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia, and in 2011, his 5-foot-high statue of Genghis Khan astride a wild-maned horse was temporarily installed in London's Marble Arch, an event that drew both praise and outrage (Khan, the terrorist!). Figurative art has its detractors, to be sure, but in Namdakov's case, the form—whether sculpture or jewelry—utterly suits the content: mythological narrative, both real and implied.

Andrea DiNoto is a New York-based writer on jewelry, art, and design

"Nubis: Julia Maria Künapp"

Sienna Gallery, Lenox, Massachusetts
July 19 – August 11, 2013

by Aaron Patrick Decker

Nubis Melting (brooch), 2013
obsidian, gold
length 5 3/16"

Rainy Summer (ring), 2012
smoky quartz, gold
1 5/16 x 1/4 x 1 1/8"

"Nubis" represents the first solo exhibition of Estonian artist Julia Maria Künapp to be held in the United States. A graduate of the Estonian Academy of Art, Künapp studied with celebrated Estonian metalworker Kadri Mälk. Her work sent ripples through the field, seducing viewers into a world of melted and faceted gemstones.

Strikingly poetic and crafted with a hand that grasps the air itself, the work operates with both conceptual strength and visual power. As in her earlier jewelry, Künapp reveals the highest levels of craftsmanship and allows the viewer into the silent moments of the artist's mind, almost like a writer of memoirs. We are caught between synaptic firings, just when the flash of electricity has frozen the subject onto the immeasurably small molecules of quartz crystal. The result is time mute.

Künapp's exhibition opened soon after the start of Myra Mimlitsch-Gray's solo at the same gallery, drawing a line between the two artists' sensibilities. Both of these artists address ideas of preciousness by executing a technique so skillfully that the work begins to operate above the traditional notions of craft and enter the sublime. Was this a coincidence? Sienna Patti, the gallery's owner, explained that she "always [makes] sure that my exhibitions complement each other. Therefore placing Mimlitsch-Gray's exhibition before Maria-Künapp was a very conscious decision. Both artists' work inhabit a purity and are comfortable in both large and small spaces. Both woman have the skills to make whatever they want so what they choose to make becomes all the more important."

Important indeed, Künapp's jewelry uses the icon of the faceted gem in a manner that verges on brand new. Simple, yet effective, the pieces speak to the change and flux of what is valuable, what is precious. A melting gemstone? The film of Truman Capote's *Breakfast at Tiffany*'s gives us a perfect snapshot of the power of jewelry in shaping identity. In the movie's iconic opening scene Holly Golightly, wearing a sleek black dress and an exquisite necklace, her hair twisted into a chignon, peers into Tiffany's display windows. She eats breakfast from a take-out bag, a hint of another lifestyle, yet the viewer is fooled into believing she is high society and rich. She then returns home to her small, not so glamorous apartment, and we see the real person, Lula Mae Barnes, eventually learning she is a once-married Texan who has left her husband, moved to New York City, and is in the employ of a mobster. The Tiffany jewelry represents status. It is precious and important and confers status on the wearer. Yet how would that first impression have changed if Holly had found the Tiffany gemstones melting under the hot display lights?

Künapp's work takes advantage of the perceived value of gemstones in jewelry and undercuts it in a gesture of impermanence. As if with a swooping paint brush, Künapp makes a mark on the material, and by subtracting stone she builds meaning. She shapes, facets, and carves the material to the point at which actions and moments are suspended like light in the emulsion of a photograph. Her work speaks to time in a two-fold sense. The methods of making are time intensive and laborious, yet in their visual impact are quick and effortless. Many of Künapp's objects are like flash-frozen snapshots where a faceted stone splashes up around itself like spilled liquid, a solitaire ring stone spills over itself, and the face of a faceted quartz appears to have been hit with water that ripples to the stones' edges.

Aaron Patrick Decker is an artist, art jewelry writer, and MFA candidate at Cranbrook Academy of Art.

"Attai Chen: Compounding Fractions"

Galerie Loupe
Montclair, New Jersey
September 7–30, 2013

by Misha Kahn

Attai Chen's latest exhibition gives the impression of viewing the magical underside of a log. A series of necklaces, brooches, and one towering shoulder piece employ Chen's signature process of meticulously altering and layering paper into flaky, blossoming oyster mushroom-esque flourishes. The work borrows imagery from nature's less noteworthy and nonclichéd beauties to explore the relationship between growth, decay, and the maker's hand.

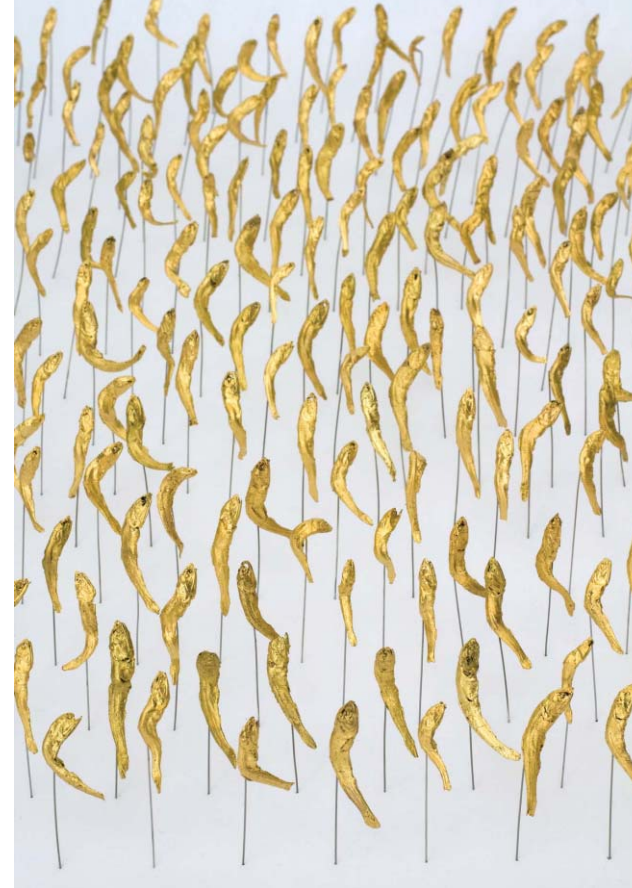
The level of intricacy and texture, from the building of colors to the quantity of layers, adds to the sense that these pieces were grown rather than crafted. The ambiguity of how the effects are created adds a beguiling emotive tone. Chen describes the process as spontaneous, based on cutting and tearing the pieces and then composing the forms, allowing the viewer to connect with the labor in a visceral way. We make a direct connection to the artist's hand, tapping into the same kind of energy related to ceramics. The torn edges and inconsistencies suggest something growing—or, conversely, beginning to decay.

The Young Zabars (brooch), 2011
paper, newspaper, glue, brass, graphits, silver, stainless steel
3 1/8 x 4 x 2 3/8"
PHOTO: MIREI TAKEUCHI

Chen also discusses his jewelry in terms of motion. In making them, he follows more emotional cues than visual ones. The forms exist in a strange limbo between something that is exploding or blossoming while also frozen, like a snapshot—intensity has been captured and made static. To achieve this, Chen soaks the completed, still fragile, malleable creation in acrylic polymer. The inherent tension is best appreciated when seeing the pieces in person, rather than in photographs where rigidity is a given.

The leaves or shale of the works are altered, dyed, and also marked with written notes. *The Young Zabars*, composed of torn sheets of comics from an Israeli children's newspaper, was one of my favorites, perhaps because it has a dark, apocalyptic humor. In the other objects, markings add textural depth, but hints of scribble or brushes give it a frenetic energy. This intricate detail captures the essence of nature's complexity, without reverting to Chen's previous work that exists more as jewelry-based photorealism. The brooches and necklaces literally carry notes recording Chen's thoughts. Hidden in the folds of the pieces, such scribbles become magical and secretive. Some of Chen's pendants hang from tonally matching string, others from silver chain. The string felt too ephemeral, however, and the chain too much like conventional jewelry for these unconventional forms.

The exhibition installation is centered on *Predictions of a Well Wisher,* a loose grid of gold-coated anchovies. This is a rare moment when a fairly abstract idea is easy to grasp. Displayed together, the fish retain some individuality while assembled into the customary school formation. The viewer's perception parallels other experiences of part and whole, such as eating a bowl of mussels, then realizing they are actually individual animals, or living in a large city—being in a crowd and an individual at the same time. Chen found inspiration in the terracotta soldiers buried in China. On a visual level the display was a wildly successful ordering of floppy anchovies, creating a vibrant, energetic plane. Given that the installation piece was composed of actual sardines, its salability as jewelry is problematic. Chen also created individual stickpins from cast and plated fish which, when separated from the group, were less successful as they lost the conceptual complexity and tenuous relationship between group and individual. But as discrete objects, and if classified as nautical jewelry, they were about as highbrow as it gets.



Predictions of a Well Wisher (installation detail), 2013
dried anchovies, fine gold leaf, brass, stainless steel
dimensions variable
PHOTO: MIREI TAKEUCHI

Chen was recently awarded the Andrea M. Bronfman Prize for the Arts for which he will be given a solo exhibition at the Tel Aviv Museum. Gallery Loupe's gem-sized space provided a very intimate environment for his detailed work, and the expansive space at the Tel Aviv museum will no doubt offer new territory for exploration. Meanwhile, "Compounding Fractions," an emotional, visually elegant exhibition, was a breath of fresh air in a contemporary jewelry context usually unconcerned with being either of these.

Misha Kahn is a contemporary jewelry enthusiast and furniture maker based in New York City.

"Functions: Haley Bates, Sun Kyoung Kim, and Myra Mimlitsch-Gray"

Brick City Gallery at Missouri State University, Springfield
September 6–October 5, 2013

by Lynn Cool

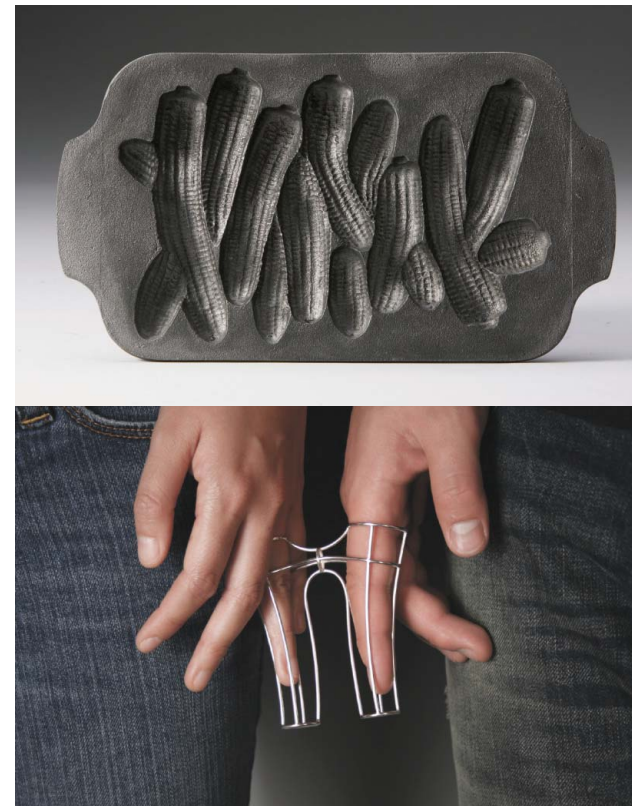
Historical paintings, sculpture, and decorative objects often functioned beyond face value, so that a painting depicting a battle, a statue inspiring devotion, and a crown set with dynastic wealth speak as cultural tools of power, religion, and prestige. Given that an idea cannot depart from preconception unless it is already rooted in a historical precedent, we can understand many contemporary works as reinterpretations of a standard. With this principle in mind, the exceptionally crafted objects within "Functions" ask the viewer to compare and consider one's own standard—a built-in, experiential-based schematic.

Interestingly, all works here are made of metal with no other materials included, delivering the artists' contextual themes point-blank. During a 2007 residency at Kohler Company, Myra Mimlitsch-Gray reconfigured the standard cast-iron skillet in *Modified Corn Pone Pan, Monsanto,* and *Mitosis*. These three works feature ear-of-corn depressions placed in uneven patterns across the pan's face to illustrate the series' commentary on genetic modification. Similarly, a wall-mounted grouping of curved *Brat Pans* intended for sausages are elongated and transmuted into multihandled concoctions that create a dichotomy of use and consequence.

Similar to Mimlitsch-Gray's transmuted abstractions but devoid of political overtones, Haley Bates stages a scenario of altered physicality, offering variations of the tableware format through stylized twisting and stretching. Expanding on the character of commemorative sterling silver baby spoons, *Twenty Small Ones* presents uniquely inventive forms. Handles splay evenly, curve away asymmetrically, surge forward to meet a spoon's bowl, or flow delicately into forged tendrils. Fastened to the wall like butterfly specimens, the display seems nearly clinical, but a play of light and shadow relieves the rigid grid formation and amplifies the variations' quiet presence. The straightforwardly raised bowls of *Pullulate I, II, & III* are enlivened by outrageous divergence from the traditional chalice form to the point of seeming like parody. Whether the stem drops nearly to the floor or undulates between a chalice's double cup terminations, Bates's unsettling vessels lead one to imagine the precarious consequences of use.

Haley Bates
Pullulate I, 2011
copper, steel
8 x 6 x 14"

Unlike the rejection of function evident in works by Bates and Mimlitsch-Gray, Sun Kyoung Kim's wearable objects are fully realized only when activated through interaction between two people. As potential vehicles of play, ritual, and performance, these constructions convey concrete and abstract realities about relationships, focusing on the body as an accessible space. Kim's "Connection" series,



Myra Mimlitsch-Gray
Modified Corn Pone Pan, 2007
cast ductile iron
8 ½ x 15 ¼ x 1 ¼"

Sun Kyoung Kim
Ring from "For Two" series, 2010
sterling silver
3 ¼ x 3 ½ x 1"

with double ring shanks that converge into a centralized mechanism, offer a strong metaphor for synergistic union. In *Connection 02*, an open wire finger shank contrasts with its solid tubular companion, presenting a disparity of form that emphasizes individuality. In contrast, the centralized joint unions of *Connection 03* and *04* overshadow the more uniform conjoined rings, embodying the culture of interdependence. Within the four ring devices in the series "For Two," an open frame replicates itself in stacked or offset binary structures, beckoning two people to engage in mutual exploration. Framed photographs illustrate each gestural variation, leading viewers to a singular version of synchronized unity. Kim's double cage structures are ripe with possible interpretations that range from the bliss of idyllic romance to darker scenarios of entrapment.

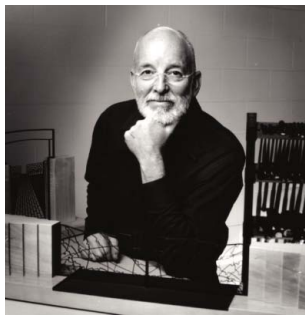
Art that veers away from expectations serves to generate an internal dialogue. While this exhibition may not answer long-standing questions about an object's essence and the enigma of character, it does urge the viewer to question the role that function plays in our understanding and appreciation of art.

Lynn Cool is a metalsmith and writer living in Lawrence, Kansas.

Gary Griffin

BY MARJORIE SIMON

I like to put myself in situations where I have to climb up.
—GARY GRIFFIN



Metalsmith Gary Griffin

THE SNAG LIFETIME Achievement Award honors an artist who sets a standard to strive for, who has nurtured generations of students, or served institutions of higher learning, all while creating works of material art that are the envy of the rest of us. Gary Griffin, for twenty-two years Artist-in-Residence and Head of Metalsmithing at Cranbrook Academy of Art, the crucible of American design, is all this and more.

Confession: Two of Gary's "Sentimental Signs," a series of heart-shaped jewelers' hand tools, mark the passage from my residence to my studio. I've got the hearts but Gary stole mine through decades of poetic metalwork, critical thinking, and uncompromising professional leadership.

Gary made the iron gates through which all must pass to enter the Cranbrook campus. There he taught, thought, and mentored students, working on his own commissions with their help during the summer and focusing on students' work during the academic year. Unsurprisingly, these students appreciate their good fortune and have repaid him by making their own contributions to the field. Myra Mimlitsch-Gray, former student and now leader in her own right, may have said it best: "His work ethic is unmatched. . . . He is perpetually curious about so many subjects. He is a scholar of American studies, and he celebrates the concepts of family, community, and common man embedded in the American experience."

Maquette for Gates, 2013
basswood, mild steel
13 x 15 x 6"

Gary's creativity and leadership helped draw me from somewhere out on the periphery into greater involvement in the field, making SNAG and *Metalsmith* seem inclusive. It began with his radical essay "Remaking Materials," co-authored with then-student Erika Ayala Stefanutti, and its subsequent, and equally radical, presentation at the 1995 SNAG conference in New Orleans.[1] On the page, the authors carried on a conversation about a single metallic element: lead. The caffeinated typography heralded changes in text design that were just beginning to appear in alternative publications of the times. And in a good example of what Gary calls "marinating ideas" the content eventually led to the formation of the activist group Ethical Metalsmiths.

Then there was the conference presentation. The two presenters reprised their written conversation in person, chronicling the social history and physical properties of lead. They galvanized the audience with two video clips. In one, a scene from *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*, a cyborg morphs into a figure of shimmering metal. In the other, from the end of *Schindler's List*, Schindler's factory workers contribute the gold from their teeth, and, using tools we also use, melt it and fabricate a ring in gratitude to Herr Schindler as he is forced to flee the advancing Allied Forces.

Together Gary and Erika brought us back to our commonality, by returning to the materiality to which we also return as craft artists. Sharing the podium and the page they alternated between the rational and the emotional, the theoretical and the tangible. And the moving images had a huge impact—first, by referring to current popular culture, and second, because videos were then rare in slide presentations.

In a 1985 *Metalsmith* article, C.E. Licka selected a poem of sorts from Gary's own writing about his process. It begins by claiming his place as a craftsman—"I hesitate to call this work sculpture"—and contains the lines that capture his ethos: "allowing for the simultaneous/existence of extremes;/an orchid adjacent to a chain link/fence."[2]

Marjorie Simon is a Philadelphia-based metalsmith and writer.

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1. Erika Ayala Stefanutti and Gary Griffin, "Remaking Materials," *Metalsmith* 14, no.3 (Summer 1994): 32-39.
2. C.E. Licka, "Ornamental Polarities," *Metalsmith* 5, no.4 (Fall 1985): 9–15.

Furthermore:
"Oral History Interview with Gary Griffin by Glenn Adamson," August 4, 2004, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, www.aaa.si.edu

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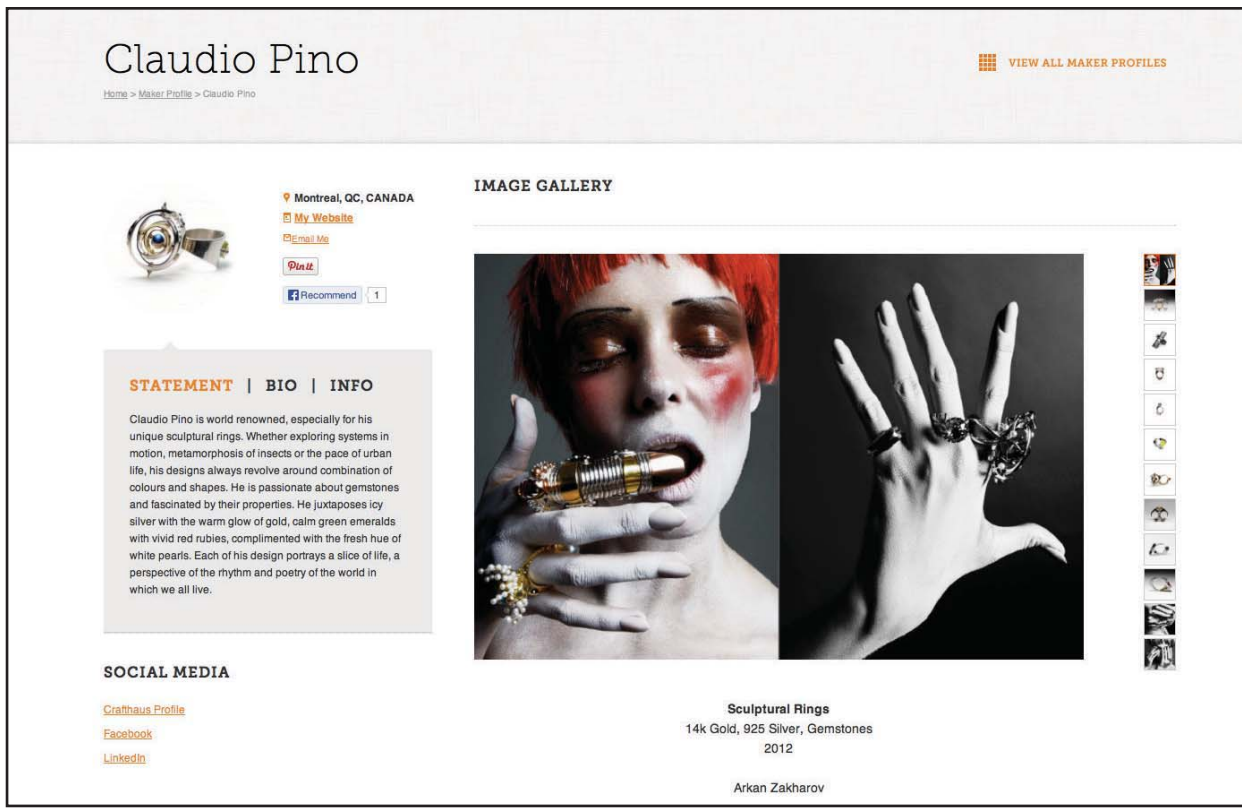
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Claudio Pino is world renowned, especially for his unique sculptural rings. Whether exploring systems in motion, metamorphosis of insects or the pace of urban life, his designs always revolve around combination of colours and shapes. He is passionate about gemstones and fascinated by their properties. He juxtaposes icy silver with the warm glow of gold, calm green emeralds with vivid red rubies, complimented with the fresh hue of white pearls. Each of his design portrays a slice of life, a perspective of the rhythm and poetry of the world in which we all live.
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Speakers for SNAG's "Emerging Artists" lecture series at SOFA 2013: Yong Joo Kim, Heather Bayless, and Dukno Yoon
PHOTO: DONALD FRIEDLICH

The National Ornamental Metal Museum in Memphis, home to the Mark Baldridge collection of metalsmithing books.
PHOTO: THOMAS R. MACHNITZKI

SNAG/SOFA Lectures a Huge Success

SNAG once again participated in the SOFA Lecture series. We had a record total number in attendance with over 350 people listening to one of the three lectures. In "SNAG Emerging Artists 2013: Dukno Yoon, Heather Bayless, and Yong Joo Kim," each artist spoke about their innovative approaches to making jewelry and objects. "Time is the Creator If It's Given a Chance," the lecture given by the award-winning Czech design team Daniel Posta and Zdenek Vacek, described the use of chemical and biological processes and crystal replication to develop fascinating necklaces and bracelets that hover on the boundary between jewelry and conceptual art. In "Living with Silver in the 21st Century," master silversmiths Rob and Jaap Thalen presented observations on the cultural shift surrounding the decline in silver for everyday use and made the case for returning the use of silver to contemporary life. After this lecture, I was ready to break out the good silver for dinner! Many thanks to Don Friedlich for coordinating these SNAG talks.

2014 SNAG Conference "From Grains to Gold"

SNAG's upcoming conference, "From Grains to Gold," is sure to be a great one! We have a very strong lineup of speakers including: Dr. Tanya Harrod, George Sawyer, Jenni Sorkin, Andy Cooperman, Miriam Hiller, with many engaging presentations, demos, and lectures planned. And this year we also have new program formats, earlier programming, and both a studio crawl and an exhibition crawl on the agenda! Be sure to register now before the deadline.

The Mark Baldridge Book Project

In 2012 Mark Baldridge donated his collection of almost 250 books on metalsmithing to SNAG, with the wish that they benefit SNAG in some way. At the conference in Toronto, Marlene True and Tim McCreight met to determine what should be done with this amazing collection. Considering the greatest way to make an impact and to have the material available for researchers, SNAG approached the National Ornamental Metal Museum (NOMM) about becoming the repository of this library. Excitedly NOMM accepted and the books now reside in the museum's collection. SNAG would like to thank Mark Baldridge for donating such an impressive collection, Marlene True and Tim McCreight for organizing the books, Greg Orloff for generously inventorying them, and NOMM for giving the books a good home. Also thank you to Arline Fisch, Tim McCreight, C. James Meyer, and Donald Stuart for donating to this project.

Erratum

The Review of "Once More with Love," in *Metalsmith*'s vol 33, no 4, misattributed the cofounders of Ethical Metalsmiths, who are in fact Susan Kingsley and Christina Miller.

Society of North American Goldsmiths 43rd Annual Conference

April 23 - 26, 2014 – Minneapolis

EARLY CONFERENCE KICK-OFF!

Our conference gets started EARLY this year on *Wednesday, April 23 at 6:30 p.m.* with opening remarks followed by our first panel presentation "Fresh, Marinated, Seasoned: Three Stages in a Life of Teaching, Learning, and Making" by Sharon Church, Rachel Timmins, and April Wood. This opening event will be followed by the ever popular Pin Swap! Don't be late!

PRESENTATIONS:

Keynote by Dr. Tanya Harrod, Individual presentations by Sofia Bjorkman, Andy Cooperman, Lauren Fensterstock, Mirjam Hiller, Marc Maiorana, George Sawyer, Jenni Sorkin. Presentation by Rod Kelly and Cheryl Krismer and two panel presentations by Sharon Church, April Wood, Rachel Timmins and Caroline Gore, Edgar Mosa, Kerianne Quick. Five Early Career Artists including Venetia Dale, Seth Gould, Tova Lund, Seth Papac and Gustav Reyes.

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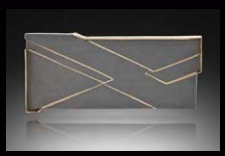

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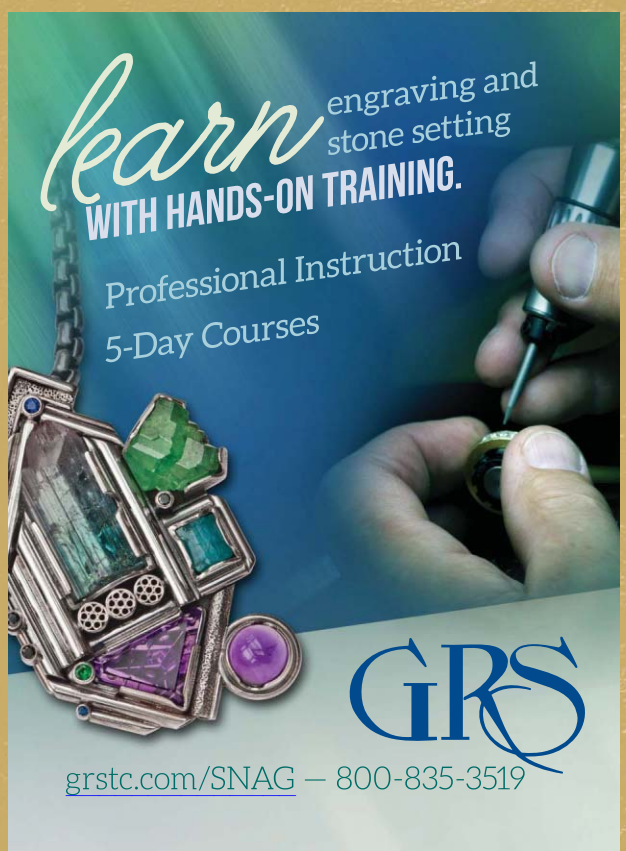

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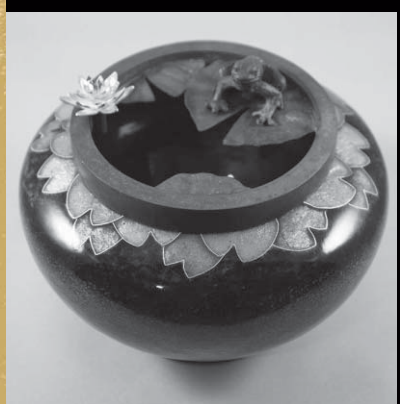

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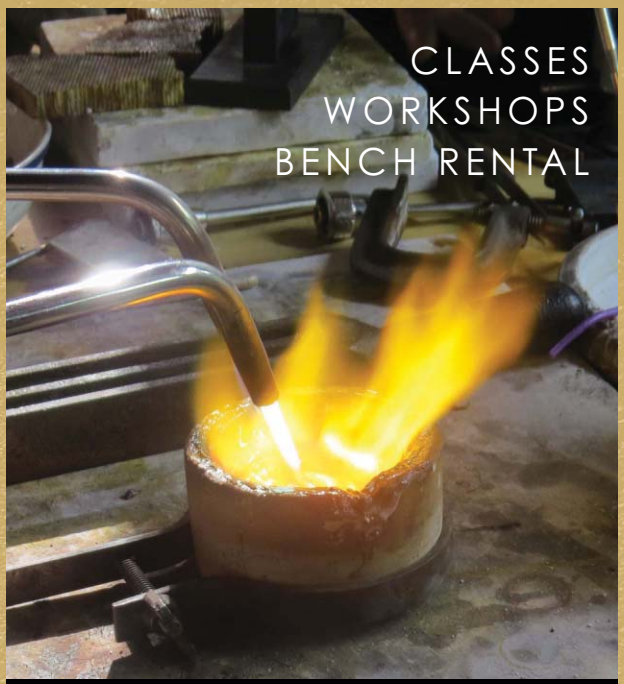

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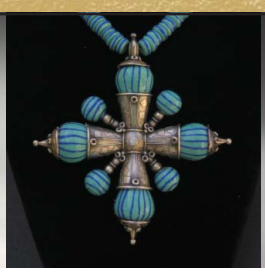

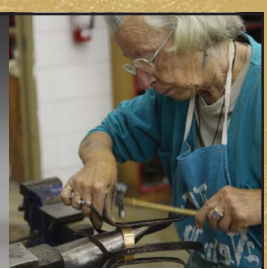

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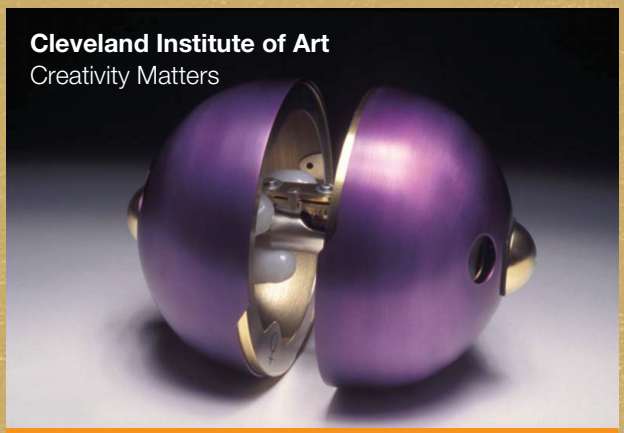

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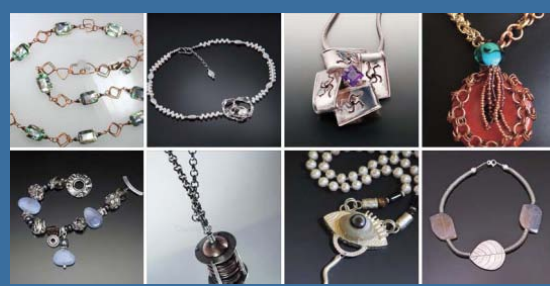

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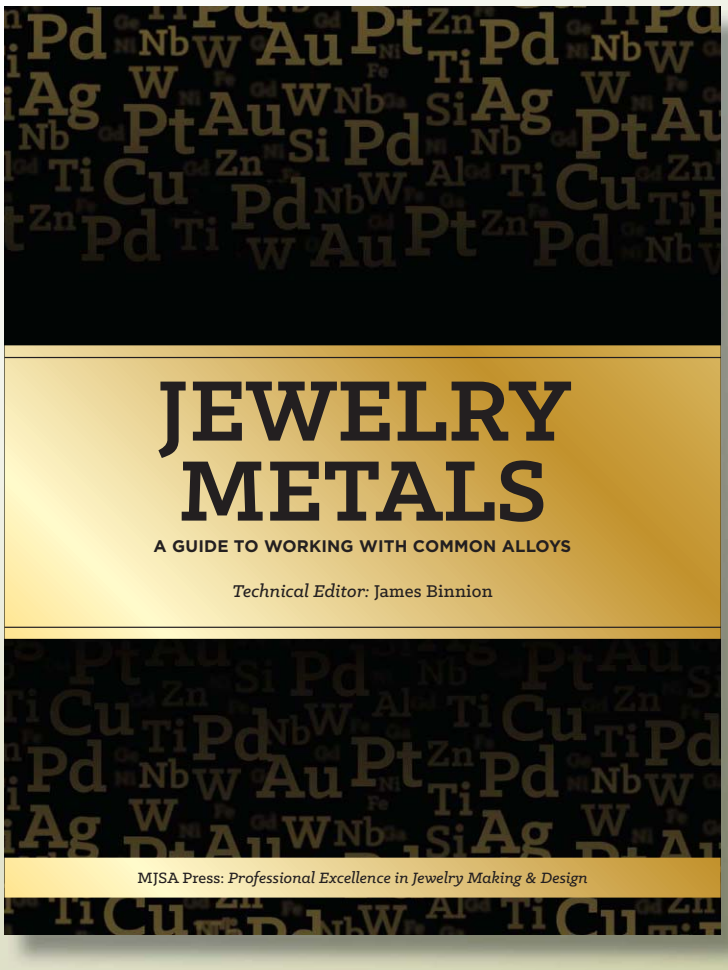
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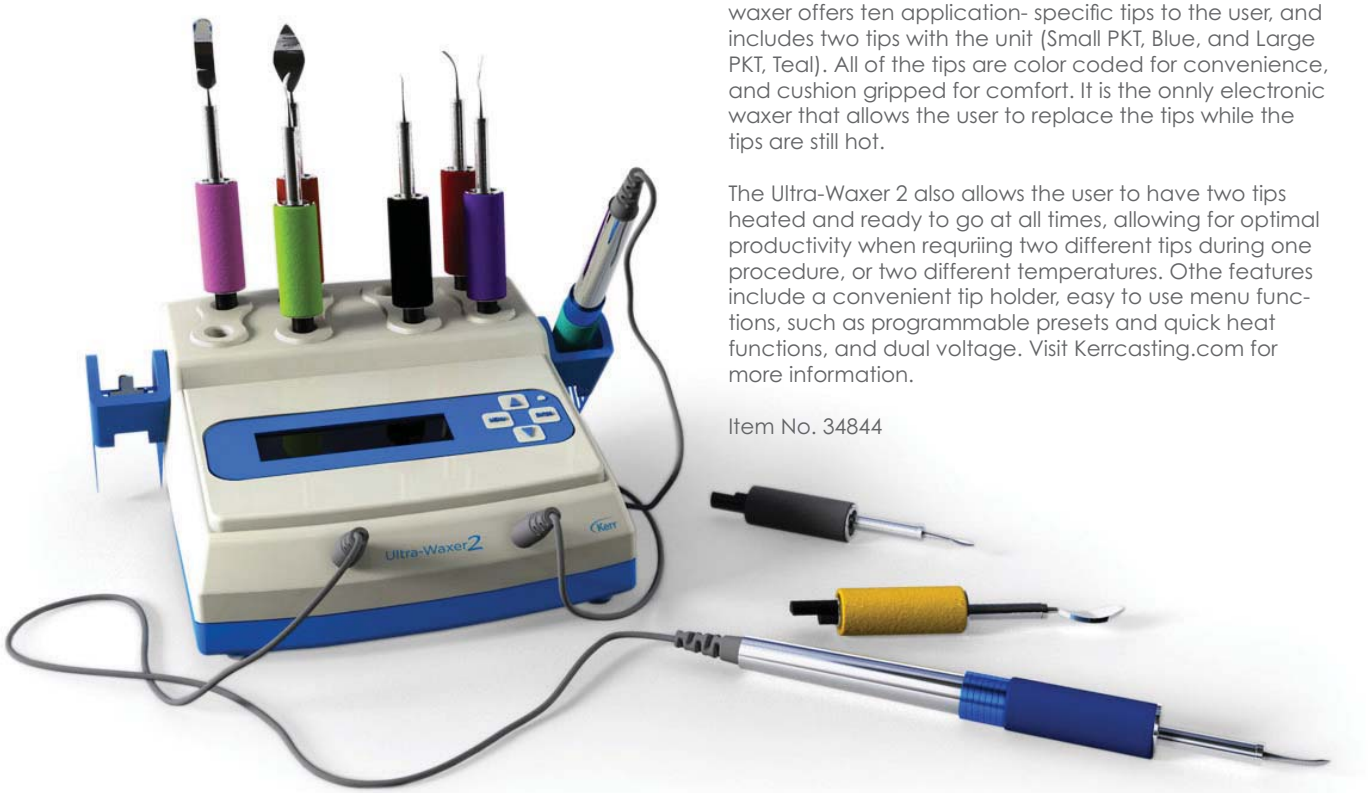

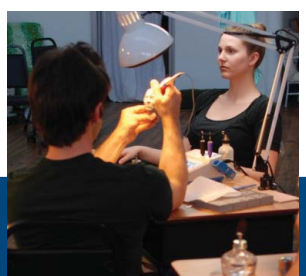

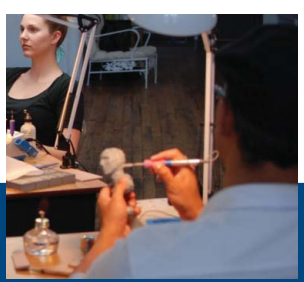

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metalsmith index of advertisers vol. 34 no. 2

92nd Street Y 69
Academy of Art University 67
Alex Sepkus ..... Cover
Arrowmont School 69
Art + Design New York 7
Artrider 11
Atelier Hg & Company, Inc. 5
Camp Fernwood 72
CERF+ 74
Cleveland Institute of Art 70
Coming in Metalsmith 6
Craftboston Spring 8
Creative Metalsmiths 14
Creative Metalworks 71
Denver School of Metal Arts 69
Downeast Trading Co 80
Elise Bergeron 12
Facere Jewelry Art Gallery 15
Fitzgerald Jewelry 68
Gem & Lapidary Wholesalers 75
GIA 68
Gloria Askin 12
Green Jewelry News 79
GRS 66
Gustav Reyes 13
Halstead Bead 79
Hauser & Miller 73
Hazel Kuffer 13
Helen Blythe-Hart 14
Idyllwild Arts 68
International Society of Glass Beadmakers 11
J Cotter Gallery 12
Jewelspan 75
John C. Campbell Folk School 67
John Parrish Photography 14
Kerr Corporation 77
Legacy Findings 73
Maurice Goldman & Sons, Inc. 79
Mendocino Art Center 66
Minneapolis Convention & Visitors Association 9
MJSA 76
Myron Toback 75
National Ornamental Metal Museum 1
North Bennet Street School 71
Otto Frei ..... Cover
Ox-Bow 66
Pam Caidin 15
Patina Gallery 13
Penland School of Crafts 71
Peters Valley School of Craft 66
Rago Arts & Auction Center 10
Reactive Metals Studio 73
Revere Academy of Jewelry Arts 72
Rio Grande ..... Cover
Sara Gallo 11
Smithsonian Craft Show 6
SNAG Conference '14 65
SNAG Maker Profiles 63
SNAG Membership 15
Snow Farm 67
Studio Jewelers, Ltd. 70
The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) 3
Touchstone Center for Crafts 70
Tripp Lake Camp 72
United Precious Metals Refining 78
Walker Art Center 10
Wayne Art Center 10
William Baran-Mickle 6

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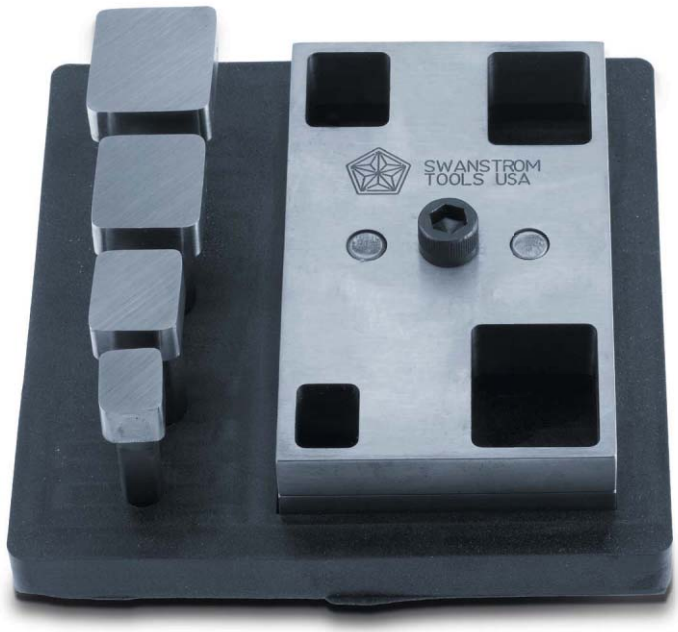

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